

SPRING 2026

all about Avon city news



A Message from The City of Avon Tree Commission

We're excited to share the latest updates, insights, and resources from our ongoing efforts to nurture and protect our community's trees. Whether you've supported our mission for years or are just getting involved, this newsletter offers a closer look at the important work helping preserve the green spaces that keep our city vibrant and healthy.

We encourage you to take a few moments to explore the valuable information in this issue, including the Ask the Arborist section and other helpful features. Please be sure to save the date for our Arbor Day Celebration on Saturday, October 3rd. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at Treecommission@cityofavon.com. Your message will be directed to the appropriate member for a response—we're always here to help.

Thank you for joining us in this important effort. Together, we can ensure our trees continue to thrive and keep Avon beautiful for generations to come

Memorial Tree Program

Residents are invited to purchase a tree in memory of a loved one, to dedicate to a friend or family member, or to commemorate a special event as part of the City of Avon Memorial Tree Program. Neighbors and guests in our parks share that remembrance and harmony for present and future generations. For more information and to find the form, please scan the QR code.



Scan QR code for
Memorial Tree Form

TREE COMMISSION MEMBERS

Mary Berges, Council Representative
Alex Boccabella
Megan Engelmann
Mary Johnson
Collin O'Donnell
Olivia Pajak
Matt Smith, Pro Tem, Mayor's Designee
John Traxler
Richard Varga, Chair, Certified Arborist,
non-voting member
Liesa Wetzig

The Avon Tree Commission consists of nine members and a certified arborist and meets the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.



Nine commission members and Certified Arborist

THE MISSION OF THE TREE COMMISSION

The mission of the Tree Commission is to study, advise and encourage the adoption and then implementation of a comprehensive plan for the proper planting of new and replacement trees and maintaining the health of existing trees in the urban forest. The Tree Commission will also provide resource materials and information pertaining to proper tree selection and care.

Gold Leaf Award

The Avon Tree Commission was honored with the 2025 Gold Leaf Award on February 5, 2026, at the annual Ohio Tree Conference in Newark. Presented by the International Society of Arboriculture Ohio Chapter, this award recognizes outstanding achievement in urban forestry and environmental stewardship.



Avon received this recognition for its innovative shade tree plan, developed in conjunction with the city's land disturbance fee ordinance. This ordinance requires property owners—both commercial and residential—to pay a fee when land is disturbed for development. Currently set at \$200 per acre, these funds are reinvested directly into the community's tree canopy.

As a result of this initiative, the city planted 27 new trees last fall across its park system, enhancing green spaces and supporting long-term environmental health. This program not only offsets the impact of development but also demonstrates Avon's proactive approach to sustainability, beautification, and preserving the natural character of the community for residents to enjoy for years to come.

SAVE THE DATE



Avon Tree Commission Hosted the Tree City USA Award Ceremony

The event was held at Tom's Country Place, over 50 communities from Northeast Ohio gathered for education and celebration of Tree City awards.



Ask the Arborist

By Rick Varga, Certified Arborist #OH-6100-A

Q: What is tree ownership and responsibility in Avon?

A: In Avon, Ohio tree ownership hinges on location. Trees on private property are the homeowner's responsibility, even if branches or roots extend into the neighbor's land. Trees in the tree lawn (between the sidewalk and street) are also owned by the adjacent homeowner, who must keep them maintained. The city's role is limited to addressing public trees if they become hazardous, but it does not resolve neighbor disputes—those must be settled between homeowners, based on Ohio common law. If a privately owned tree causes damage, liability depends on whether the tree was healthy or hazardous. Homeowners should act promptly and, if needed, seek legal advice.

Q: How do I resolve disputes and concerns over trees with my neighbors in Avon, Ohio?

A: Citizens are encouraged to resolve tree-related questions or disputes by simply making a polite inquiry or request of the other party. If the parties are unable to agree on the tree ownership or maintenance practices, the conflict remains a private civil issue, and either party may consider consulting an attorney.

The city may be contacted should there be a question about whether a tree is located within the residents' or city-owned property.

Please send your questions to be featured in our next newsletter. Ask the Arborist your question at treecommission@cityofavon.com.

Meet the Student Board Members



Collin O'Donnell

Collin O'Donnell's love of hiking and exploring natural areas sparked his passion for protecting the environment. He joined the Avon Tree Commission

to learn how communities preserve and enhance green spaces and to pursue a future career in natural resource management and environmental policy.

Through his work, Collin has gained insight into decisions about Avon's urban forest, from tree planting to identifying invasive species, and has deepened his understanding of environmental issues and local government. He is proud of analyzing the city's tree canopy using satellite data and GIS software and encourages students to get involved, build leadership skills, and make a community impact.



Olivia Pajak

Olivia Pajak, a 12th-grade senior, joined the Avon Tree Commission to engage in local government and support environmental preservation. She

wanted to actively protect natural spaces in Avon while gaining experience aligned with her goal of pursuing environmental science.

Olivia has learned how citizens can influence local government and is proud of connecting students with nature by integrating K–12 Tree Campus programs into her high school and introducing environmental topics into curricula. She encourages other students to get involved, emphasizing teamwork, civic engagement, and making meaningful contributions to a greener, more sustainable community.

Calling Young Tree Lovers to Be a Tree Commission Student Member

Are you a high school student interested in becoming involved in building the future of Avon? Do you know a student who wants to learn more about helping their community and the environment?

The Avon Tree Commission is looking for a student member. The candidate should be a high school student and must be an Avon resident at least 16 years old. The ideal candidate will have an interest in environmental studies or law and seek to be an active member of the Avon community while learning and educating other community members about the growth of our urban forest. This position is not compensated, non-voting, and for a term of two years. The application deadline is **October 1**. The application can be found online.



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Thank you

Avon City Council for your support
of the Tree Commission.

Brian Fischer, At-Large, President of Council
Michelle Patton, At-Large
Mary Berges, At-Large, Tree Commission
Representative
Jennifer Demaline, Ward 1
Anne-Marie Etienne, Ward 2
Tony Moore, Ward 3
Scott Radcliffe, Ward 4



Scan QR code for
Tree Commission
Information

Freepik.com: Leaf illustration

Tree Planting Guide

The Ohio Chapter International Society of Arboriculture emphasizes that proper tree planting is critical to a tree's long-term health and success. Using the right techniques—such as planting at the correct depth, allowing space for root growth, and providing proper watering and soil conditions—helps trees establish strong root systems and structural stability. Healthy trees are more resilient to disease, pests, and environmental stress.

Proper planting ultimately enhances tree longevity and maximizes environmental benefits like shade, air quality, and storm water management.

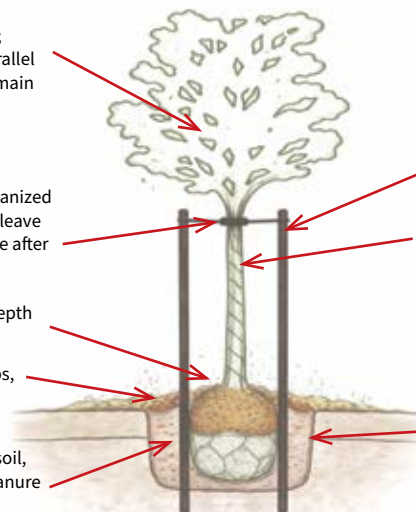
Thin interior growth;
remove crossing/parallel
branches. Keep the main
vertical stem.

Secure with #10 galvanized
wire in rubber hose; leave
1" clearance. Remove after
1 year.

Plant tree at same depth
as in nursery.

2" mulch (wood chips,
shredded bark, etc.)

Soil mix: 4 parts topsoil,
1 part mushroom manure
or peat moss.



- Water thoroughly.
- Fertilize as recommended
- Proper planting ensures healthy roots and growth.

Use 2"×2" hardwood stakes, 2+
per tree; remove after 1 year.

Tree wrapping.

Remove burlap from top 1/3
of ball; clear all synthetic
string and fabric.

3" earth mound to
retain water.

Hole 1.5–2x root ball diameter;
depth = root ball depth.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG
Ohio Utilities Protection Service
800-362-2764