



**CHICAGO
REGION
TREES
INITIATIVE**

Our Trees.
Our Communities.
Our Future.

Chicago Region Trees Initiative



A collaborative effort to support and host a healthier urban forest in the Chicago Region by 2040. This forest will be comprised of a diversity of tree species and ages, appropriately distributed across land use types in the region. The forest will provide the region improved environmental, economic and social benefits.

Better quality of life for all!

Opportunity = Responsibility



Trees and Transportation?



Mutually exclusive?



What is the urban forest?



All publically and privately
owned trees.



What is the urban forest?



Including rights of way!



Why are trees critical Infrastructure – especially for rights of way and utility easements?



Trees store carbon

Trees remove pollution from the air

Trees remove pollution from the runoff

Trees cool the environment

Trees improve property values

Trees provide habitat for wildlife!

Right's of way form linear corridors that enable connectivity and throughways.



Transportation Corridors



A **transport corridor** is a generally linear area that is defined by one or more modes of **transportation** like highways, railroads or public transit which share a common course.

Transport corridor - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transport_corridor Wikipedia ▼





Tree Census

- Within the 7 county Chicago region there are 363,000 acres of transportation/industrial/commercial property. Approximately 23% of which is plantable space = 83,000 acres

Source: Urban Trees and Forest of the Chicago Region



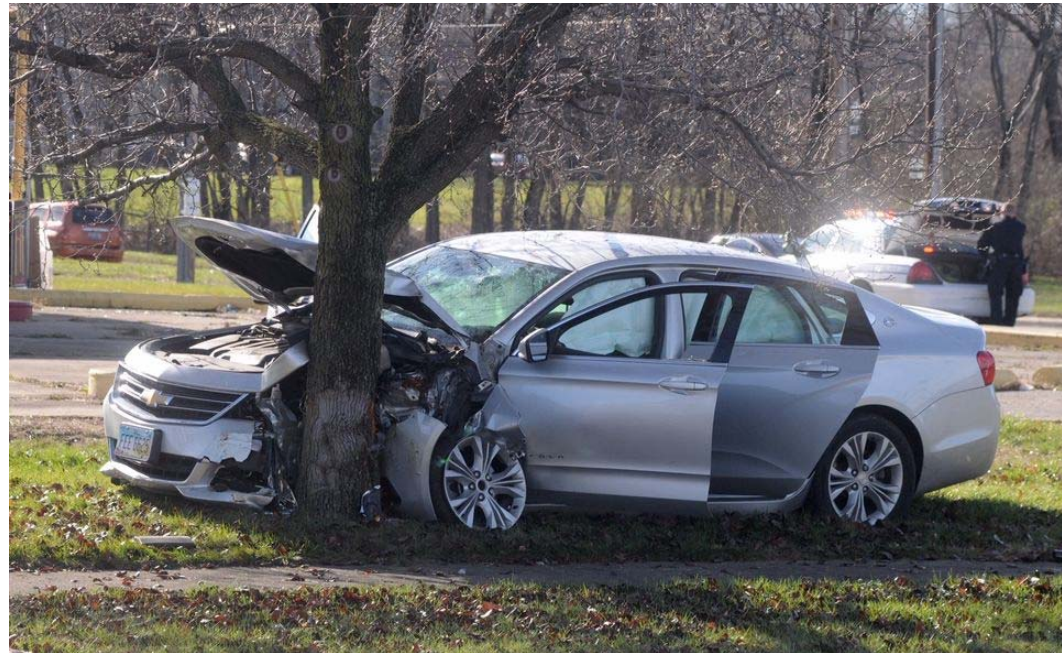
Transportation and Trees



While valued as a community asset due to their beauty and environmental benefits, trees are the single most commonly struck objects in serious roadside crashes.

Vehicle collisions with trees account for more than 4,000 fatalities and 100,000 injuries each year.

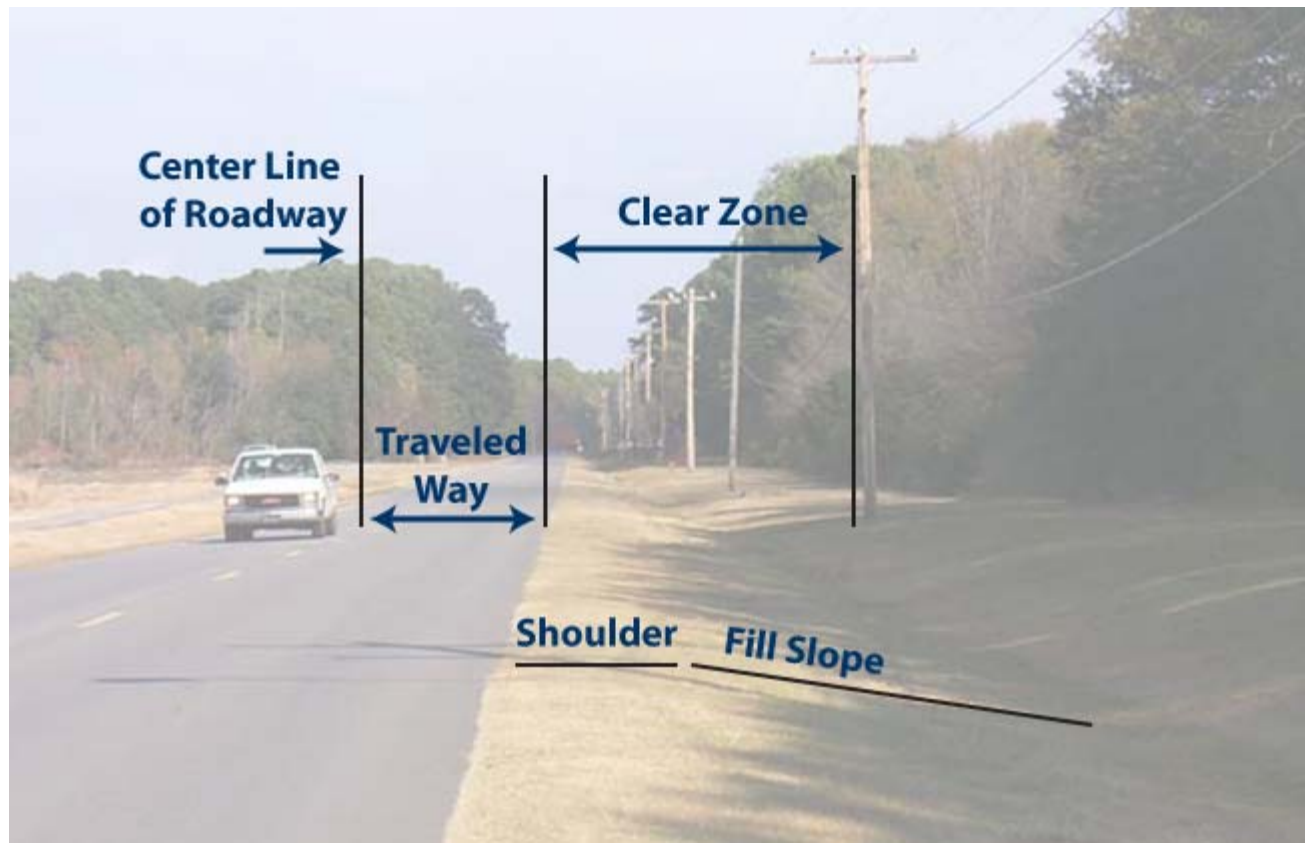
Source: NHTSA



Clear Zone



A Clear Zone is an unobstructed, traversable roadside area that allows a driver to stop safely, or regain control of a vehicle that has left the roadway. The width of the clear zone should be based on risk (also called exposure). Key factors in assessing risk include traffic volumes, speeds, and slopes. Clear roadsides consider both fixed objects and terrain that may cause vehicles to rollover.



Context Sensitive Solutions



Context-sensitive solutions (CSS) is a theoretical and practical approach to transportation decision-making and **design** that takes into consideration the communities and lands through which streets, roads, and highways pass.



Context Sensitive Solutions



Trees in the Chicago region:



Number of trees	157,142,000
Canopy cover (trees)	15.5%
Carbon storage	16.9 million tons (\$349 million)
Pollution removal	24,170 tons/year (\$183 million annually)
Compensatory value	\$51.2 billion

Source: Urban Trees and Forest of the
Chicago Region

Additional benefits



Trees provide shelter and food for a variety of insects, birds and small animals.

Native trees and shrubs are particularly important as they have evolved with the birds and wildlife of our region to be dependent upon each other.



For Instance



Tree	Species Supported
Oak	534
Cherry or plum	456
Birch	456
Crabapple	311
Maple	285
Hickory	200
Hawthorn	159
Alder	156
Basswood	150
Hazelnut	131
Beech	126

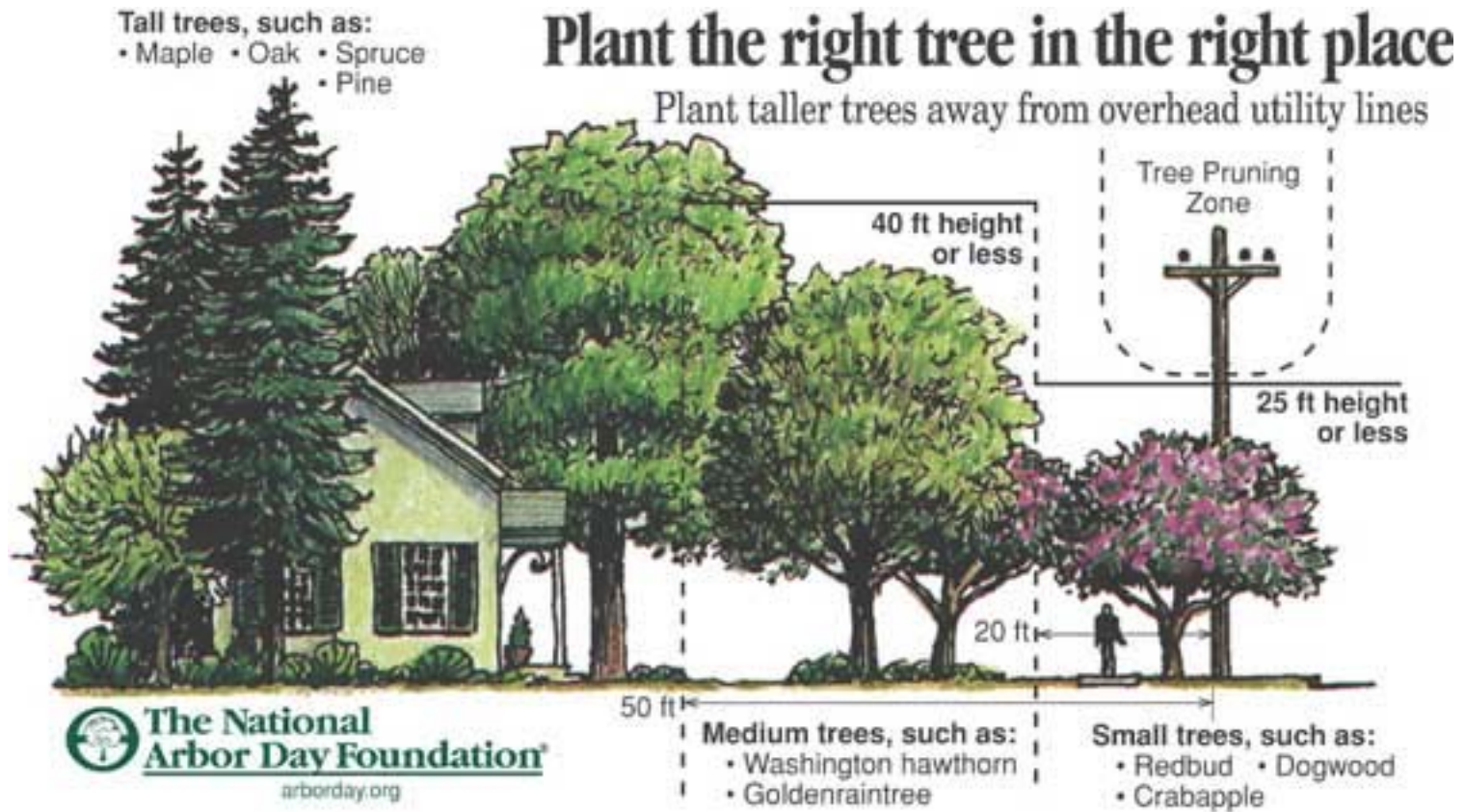
Source: Douglas Tallamy

Opportunities!



83,000 acres of opportunities!

The Right Tree in the Right Place



Tree and Site Selection

Herbaceous plants near the roadway -



Tree and Site Selection

Small trees and shrubs closer to the roadway and -



Tree and Site Selection

Larger trees – a safe distance from the roadway



Trees Are Important



- Offset impacts of transportation
 - Air quality impacts
 - Water quality impacts
 - Stormwater runoff
- Connect fragmented landscapes
- Aesthetics
- Improve quality of life for those who travel and those who live next to transportation corridors, and
- Provide habitat and resources for wildlife.

Context Sensitive Solutions



Context-sensitive solutions are solutions that take into account practical solutions and creative partnerships to achieve collective goals and objectives for people and wildlife!





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