



Step 2 - Establish a Tree Board

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the MTAS website ([mtas.tennessee.edu](https://www.mtas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained daily by MTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee municipal government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with municipal government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other MTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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Usually, the first step after initial educational efforts is to establish a legally constituted board, commission or committee to act as an advisory group to city government. This can be accomplished through an ordinance or charter procedure. Tree boards in larger cities may perform in broad planning, policy making, advisory and coordinating roles. In smaller towns, a tree board will be more involved in developing budgets, creating specific forestry plans and annual work plans, and perhaps even in helping carry out program operations.

Tree board members may be elected or appointed and may or may not be given policy-making powers. The board may be financially independent, an incorporated entity or a budgeted agency of city government.

A broad representation on the board from various agencies and interest groups will increase the board's credibility to balance the needs of different segments of the community.

A tree board ordinance is sometimes a stand-alone ordinance or part of a broader overall tree ordinance providing for care of urban trees. However constituted, the following elements should be included:

- Statement of creation and establishment;
- Number of members;
- Qualifications of members;
- Term of office, succession, and provision for staggered terms;
- Provision for vacancies;
- Compensation, if any;
- Board duties and responsibilities;
- Scope of responsibility; and
- Operational provisions, rules, recordkeeping, etc.

DISCLAIMER: The letters and publications written by the MTAS consultants were written based upon the law at the time and/or a specific sets of facts. The laws referenced in the letters and publications may have changed and/or the technical advice provided may not be applicable to your city or circumstances. Always consult with your city attorney or an MTAS consultant before taking any action based on information contained in this website.

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