



# **Maple Tree in Declining Health Will Be Removed From Edwardsville City Park**

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EDWARDSVILLE – City Park is losing a dear, old friend: A towering maple tree estimated to be about 125 years old will be removed in the near future amid safety concerns about its declining health.



The maple tree reaches high into the sky, its branches sprawling far and wide, in a prominent spot in the downtown park. It's roughly centered between the Edwardsville Public Library and South Buchanan Street. "We've been keeping an eye on it for about five years," said Sarah Cundiff, the chair of the City's Beautification & Tree Commission. "We knew it was declining and have been trying to keep it as long as possible. With that being such an active park, it's a safety concern."

An exact date hasn't been set for the tree to be brought down, but it's expected to take place within the next two weeks. Earlier in March, a tree located on the north side of the library fell on a day that saw strong winds, rain and snow pelt the City. The trunk of that tree is all that remains on the property and will be removed along with the maple tree.

Cundiff said it's with a heavy heart that the decision was made to remove the towering maple. "It's such a cool tree. But trees are a living thing, and they do come and go," said Cundiff, noting that an arborist evaluated the tree recently and suggested the time had come to remove it.

"Although it's a loss for City Park, it is a replaceable loss." Just last year, three new trees were planted in City Park - two tulip trees and one redbud - as a way to preemptively prepare for the inevitable loss of some of the park's inventory of trees. Arbor Management also had been donating its services for several years to remove dead limbs from the City Park maple tree in hopes of prolonging its life, Cundiff said. To mark the significance of this tree and memorialize the impending loss, a thank-you tribute has been affixed to it. It was adapted from the Berkeley Buddhist Monastery's "Notice of Tree Removal."

"I felt like we needed to do something to honor the life of this tree," Cundiff said. Parks and Recreation Director Nate Tingley is hopeful that a portion of the maple tree can be salvaged and repurposed in some way. Some of it also may be chipped for use along paths or in other areas.

As part of its mission, the Beautification & Tree Commission members work with the City's Parks and Recreation and Public Works Departments to ensure the health and beauty of City landscaping, trees, and flower beds.

The commission, whose volunteer members are appointed by the mayor, also oversees the annual Green Thumb Awards and the fall tree planting incentive program. For more on the commission, visit its page on the City's website: [www.cityofedwardsville.com/274/Beautification-Tree-Commission](http://www.cityofedwardsville.com/274/Beautification-Tree-Commission)