

The PISTL Municipal Arboreal Grading System

The PISTL Municipal Arboreal Grading System, or **PISTL MAGS** for short, is a grading system designed by the Wayne County Conservation District to evaluate current tree considerations for municipalities. Evaluations are graded on 5 categories: Planning, Infrastructure, Species, Training, and Laws. After evaluation, a grade will be given with solutions to any issues identified. The Conservation District can then work with the local municipality and other stakeholders such as homeowners, parks, and businesses to improve the grade.

Grading

Each category has 4 evaluations which if met, award 5 points towards the final grade.

The final grade will be out of 100 points total for easy calculation.

For example: $65/100 = 65\%$

Grades for this program are as follows:

90%-100% =A

80%-89% =B

70-79% =C

60-69% =D

59% and below =F

The Wayne County Conservation District strives for excellence and recommends all municipalities strive for an "A" grade. Those with higher grades will see greater benefits the longer time goes on than municipalities with a lower grade.

The Wayne County Conservation District is more than happy to assist on improving grades and providing the education and technical assistance. Please contact Lawrence Sobson at **(313)418-5244** for more information about this program or email at **LSobsonWCCD@gmail.com**

Planning:

- A professionally written Urban Tree Plan that includes timeframes and maps of identified work
- An inventory of municipal trees no older than 6 years old
- Considerations for trees present in the municipal Master Plan
- A net increase of trees and canopy cover over a 10-year plan

Infrastructure:

- At least 8' by 6' of soil surface area per tree (At least 50% of trees present)
- Contiguous green spaces for connected root systems
- Adequate drainage to water trees and remove standing water
- Area design to minimize soil compaction on root systems

Species:

- Diverse amount of species with even ratios being planted (Example: 15% Oaks, 15% Elms, 15% Maples, etc.)
- Removal of Invasive trees and shrubs
- Emphasis on native tree species and cultivars resistant to insect and disease
- Planting of proper species for site based on mature size, required sunlight, and soil requirements.

Training:

- Proper training and hiring of municipal personnel on tree pruning, insect and disease identification, and pesticide use to Conservation District standards
- Staff have a valid Michigan Pesticide Applicator License in 3B Ornamental application.
- Community education event for trees and community tree care (Earth Day, Arbor Day)
- Establishing best practices during construction projects to reduce soil compaction

Laws:

- Presence of a Municipal Tree Committee to create and enforce a tree ordinance
- Laws against introduction, planting, and sale of invasive species
- Enrollment in Arbor City, USA programs
- History of applying for grants to improve urban forests