



## **250 Trees for the 250th: Project Description**

As we consider appropriate ways of commemorating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Concord and Lexington, we have an opportunity to pause and look not only back, but forward: what do we want Concord to be 250 years from now? We are at an ecological inflection point, locally and globally, as we seek ways to mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis. What better way to mark the 250<sup>th</sup> than with a living monument, the planting of 250 trees?

Trees are a critical part of Concord's natural ecosystem, scenic beauty, cultural heritage, and economic sustainability. Concord Public Works (CPW) currently plants 80-100 trees per year, and the 250 trees initiative seeks to augment that number beginning in FY '25, as well as to begin immediately to highlight the importance of Concord's tree canopy and build support for more sustained funding for tree planting and maintenance into the future. Species planted will be native to the region and consistent with species identified in CPW's tree planting guide. Most importantly, a 250 trees initiative supports the Town's sustainability goals and recommendations of the 2017 Concord Tree Management Plan in an era of rapid climate change.

Citizen volunteers will work with the Permanent Memorials Subcommittee to identify potential planting sites, including locations within the public right of way, and on Town-owned and private properties where appropriate, over the summer and fall of 2023. In the spring of 2024, a working group led by Concord's Tree Warden and consisting of representatives from the School Department, Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation, and citizen volunteers will convene to define a scope of work, review the potential sites, and develop a request for bids from contractors to carry out a portion of the planting and maintenance. Members of the working group will further visit and assess identified sites to ensure they are free of constraints that would impede tree planting or result in a failure of planted trees to survive and thrive. CPW will continue to implement its current tree planting program, while the additional planting and maintenance load will be contracted out.

One or more "Commemorative Trees" may be considered for planting in a prominent location, depending upon private funding support. These trees would be representative of the entire tree planting effort, and could be substantially larger than the majority of trees planted elsewhere.

The citizen representatives will be responsible for liaising with the Concord250 Permanent Memorials Subcommittee, conducting outreach and advocacy around the appropriation of

public funds, such as the Town annual budget, Community Preservation funds, and the Concord Middle School building budget, to support the initiative, and coordinating a private fundraising campaign to support this effort. The citizen representatives will also work with the Subcommittee to document and catalog the plantings, planting activities, and publicity.

### **Work Plan and Timeline:**

- April - May 2024: Working Group defines the details of its scope of work
- January 2024 - July 2025: Public Communications
- May 2024: Town Meeting vote on CPC and Capital funding request
- August 2024: Hire tree planting contractor
- January 2024- Spring 2025: Fundraising
- Fall 2024, Spring 2025, and Fall 2025: Plant trees (three seasons)

### **Budget**

The Subcommittee has determined with the assistance of CPW a cost estimate of \$1591 per 2 ½" to 3 ½" caliper tree to be procured, installed, monitored, and watered for two years by a contractor. If the entire project were to be contracted in this manner, the resulting budget would approach \$400,000. Some cost reduction may be found through identifying planting sites appropriate for groupings of smaller trees, such as on the new Middle School campus.

The Subcommittee proposes \$125,000 in funding through the Town's FY '25 Capital Budget, and will apply for matching funds through the Community Preservation Committee. Private fundraising will need to be pursued for the Commemorative Trees and for any additional trees beyond the 250 planting.

Concord250 Permanent Memorial Subcommittee

Gary Clayton, Chair

Christa Collins

Joe Palumbo

Polly Reeve

Tooey Rogers