The City of River Falls is a Tree City USA Community and has been since 1993. Both the City and University value trees highly and have chosen to remove trees only after careful analysis. The City Forester and the UWRF Grounds Maintenance Supervisor were involved from the very beginning of the design to try and design around and save as many trees as possible. These professionals evaluated trees in the Cascade Avenue corridor and ranked the value of individual trees from 1(low) to 5(high).

In our original evaluation, 57% of the trees rated 3 or above. 50 trees are anticipated to be removed as part of the Cascade Avenue Project with 40% of those trees rated 3 or higher.

130 new trees are anticipated to be planted as part of the Cascade Avenue Project.

Some of the trees being put back in are disease resistant Elms that will help to restore part of Cascade to a look it had back in the days before the area was ravaged by Dutch Elm Disease.

Four primary factors were used to establish a value rating for existing trees:

SPECIES - Is this a good species for this area or for the site? Ash trees were given lower ratings due to the invasion of Emerald Ash Borers into this region.

CONDITION - Does this tree have strong structural integrity and good vigorous health? Is the tree dotting or decaying and is the root system sound.

SIZE - Is this tree large and imposing or small and full of potential? Smaller recently-planted trees are valued less than older trees with diameters of over 6" as tree this size are not available local nurseries.

LOCATION - How does the tree perform in the landscape? This considers things trees do: shade, screening, dust control, cooling, defining vistas, crowd control, and all aesthetic and historic factors.