

## Town of Winchester – City of Winsted

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### Office of the Town Manager

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#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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#### **Statement from Town Manager Paul Harrington: Main Street Tree Removal and Commitment to Restoration**

Winchester, CT — July 16, 2025

As Town Manager of Winchester, I want to address the recent and unexpected removal of two cherished trees along our historic Main Street. Late last night, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) notified us that these trees, which have been a defining feature of our downtown for years, were deemed unsafe and would need to be removed immediately.

This decision was not made lightly. Both the CTDOT and the Town of Winchester's own horticulturists conducted thorough assessments and independently concluded that the trees posed a danger to public safety. While we all value the beauty and legacy of our Main Street, the safety of our residents, visitors, and businesses must always come first. Structural concerns with the trees, including internal decay and weakened root systems, left them vulnerable to falling, especially during storms. The professional consensus was clear: removal was the only safe option by the State of Connecticut.

I know how much these trees mean to our community. For decades, they have provided shade, character, and a sense of continuity for generations of Winchester residents. They have witnessed countless parades, community events, and the daily life of our town. Losing them is heartbreaking for all of us, and I share in your disappointment.

Early this morning, I spoke directly with our State Representative Jay Case to discuss how we can act quickly to restore the charm and vibrancy of Main Street. We are actively working together to expedite the permitting process required to plant new trees in the same location. Our goal is to minimize the time Main Street spends without the natural beauty that helps make Winchester unique.

In anticipation of this, I have already engaged the town's horticulturist to begin the process of selecting new trees that will be well suited to our Main Street environment. We are committed to

choosing species that offer the right balance of longevity, resilience, and visual appeal that will thrive for decades and become a meaningful part of our town's story.

Throughout this process, we will be transparent and keep the community informed. Once we have secured the necessary permits and finalized our tree selection, we will share timelines and details about the replanting. We are also exploring opportunities for community involvement during the replanting phase, so residents can take part in restoring the heart of Winchester together.

I want to thank everyone for your understanding and patience. Change is difficult, especially when it affects something as beloved as our Main Street trees. Please know that my office is available to answer questions, hear your concerns, and keep you updated every step of the way.

Our commitment is not only to replace what has been lost, but to ensure that the new trees we plant will stand as a testament to Winchester's resilience, pride, and sense of community. Together, we will restore Main Street's beauty and preserve its spirit for generations to come.

Sincerely,  
Paul Harrington  
Town Manager  
Winchester, CT