



Trees in the City

Trees are vital to the health and quality of life in our region's urban communities. Their shade and roots help keep cities cool during the summer, while their leaves also remove carbon dioxide from the air. Tree root systems reduce flooding and keep our waterways cleaner by absorbing rain water and reducing runoff. Plus, trees contribute important aesthetic value to cityscapes. It's in our best interest to expand tree canopy in urban areas so all neighborhoods experience these benefits.

The map above shows tree canopy coverage in the Metro Mayors Coalition municipalities. It shows that while some cities, towns, and neighborhoods have extensive canopy, others have very little.

Planning for a healthy urban forest is more than just planning for parks. The urban tree canopy spans a patchwork of jurisdictions, including land owned by public entities such as municipalities and state agencies, and privately owned properties such as colleges, hospitals, religious institutions, office parks, and

individual residential properties. In fact, the majority of the tree canopy in the Metro Mayors region falls on privately-owned land. Strategies to protect and expand the urban tree canopy must therefore include efforts to promote more tree planting on private land.

