CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY
REGULAR MEETING OF THE URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION
Centennial Commons 7210 Olive Blvd.
Wednesday, January 14th 2026, 6:00 P.M.

AGENDA

A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

B. ROLL CALL

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES- November 12th 2025

E. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

F. DEPARTMENT REPORT

G. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Arbor Day Planting
b. Cultivating Tree Champions
c. Update on County trees

I. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review updated KPI report
b. Brainstorm ideas to accelerate tree planting

J. COMMISSION COMMENTS

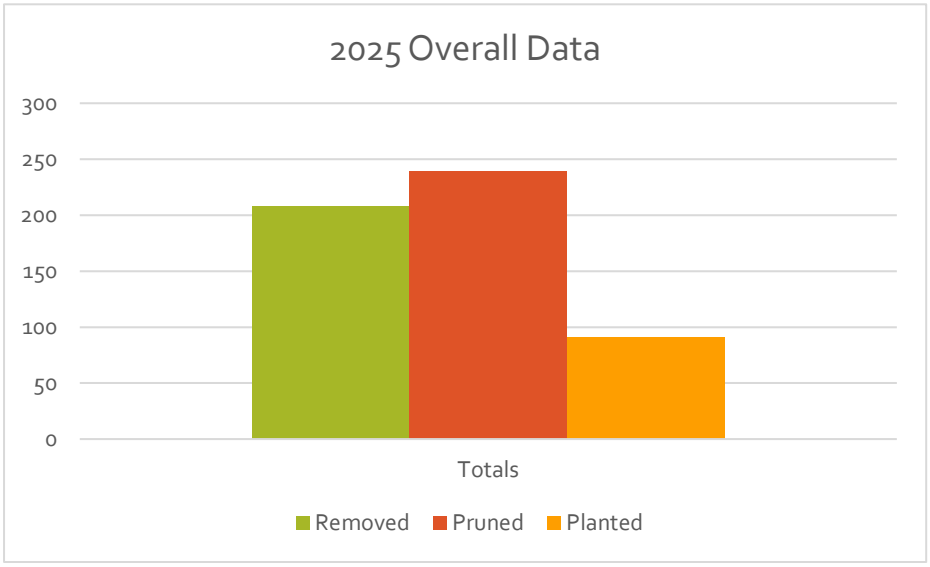
K. NEXT MEETING DATE

a. Scheduled for March 11th

L. ADJOURNMENT

2025 Forestry Data Ucity Staff

Month	Removed	Pruned	Planted
Janurary	12	0	0
February	11	10	0
March	18	50	
April	11	7	21
May	11	4	26
June	4	5	0
July	21	32	0
August	25	27	0
September	42	15	0
October	12	30	41
November	16	10	3
December	25	49	0
Totals	208	239	91



To: Todd Strubhart; Urban Forestry Commission
From: Jacob Kaiser

Date: 1/7/2026

Subject: **DECEMBER FORESTRY REPORT**

Removed 25 trees, 176 hours spent on removals.

Pruned 49 trees, 132 hours spent on pruning.

Related forestry work:

- 3 loads of woody debris were taken to Ruth Park Recycling Center
- 17 loads of chips were taken to Heman park

Comments:

To: Todd Strubhart; Urban Forestry Commission
From: Jacob Kaiser

Date: 1/7/2026

Subject: **NOVEMBER FORESTRY REPORT**

Removed 16 trees, 231 hours spent on removals.

Pruned 10 trees, 13 hours spent on pruning.

Planted 3 trees, 12 hours spent on planting.

Related forestry work:

- 3 loads of woody debris were taken to Ruth Park Recycling Center
- 13 loads of chips were taken to Heman park

Comments:

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION
UNIVERSITY CITY, ST. LOUIS COUNTY, MISSOURI
Wednesday November 12th, 2025

Agenda Item A: Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Timothy Schroeder at 6:01 pm.

Agenda Item B: Roll Call

Those in attendance included Commission President Timothy Schroeder, Vice President Dana Barhard, and Commission members, Theodore Smith, and Linda Fried. Jacob Kaiser Forestry Supervisor and Council Member Lisa Brenner and Deputy Director of Parks and Forestry Todd Strubhart were also in attendance.

Agenda Item C: Approval of Agenda

Dana Barhard motioned to accept the agenda. Theodore Smith seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item D: Approval of Minutes

Linda Fried motioned to accept the September 17th, 2025 meeting minutes. Dana Barhard seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item E: Citizens' Comments

There were no citizen comments.

Agenda Item F: Department Report

a) New Hire-Jacob Kaiser spoke about the new hire. The new hire is doing great work and fitting in nicely with the crew leader. The crew is now at 2 full time people and 1 temporary worker. Jacob Kaiser also spoke about the work that the crew has been doing over the past two months. The crew has been working on hazardous tree removals as well as planting trees.

Agenda Item G: Council Liaison Report

Council Liaison, Lisa Brenner, stated that the work on Pershing avenue has been started and the contractor has 180 days to complete the work.

Agenda Item H: Unfinished Business

a) Arbor Day Planting- The chosen planting site will be Wilson avenue and 5 trees will be planted with University City Highschool students. Lisa Brenner stated that her daughter may be able to help as she is the Director of a group called Ecoact a group that works with the Missouri Botanical Gardens.

b) Need for 7th commission member- Linda Fried says she knows someone from the 3rd ward that may be interested. It was discussed that the application to become a new commission member can be found online on the city website**.**

Agenda Item I: New Business

a) Plan for managing St. Louis County street trees-This agenda item was discussed at the beginning of the meeting to allow Mr. Strubhart time to speak so he was able to leave after the discussion. Mr. Strubhart and Mr. Kaiser were both in agreement that the draft agreement from St. Louis County was very one sided and the City does not have the manpower to take on County sidewalks. It was discussed that to care for County trees the City would have to hire more forestry crew members. It was agreed upon that Mr. Kaiser and Mr. Strubhart would come up with a dollar amount, including full time staff, that it would take to care for County trees.

Agenda Item J: Commission Comments

a) Tim Schroeder spoke about his brief discussion with the President of the Planning Commission regarding developers paying into the city tree bank if they remove trees and can not replace with the same number of diameter inches that are removed.
b) Dana Barhard discussed her ideas of Tree Champions and said that it is still a work in progress and she would be working with the communications subcommittee to further develop a plan for Tree Champions.

Agenda Item K: Next Meeting Date

The next committee meeting will be on January 14th, 2025 at 6:00 PM at the Commons.

Agenda Item #12: Adjournment

Dana Barhard motioned to adjourn the meeting Theodore Smith seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:24pm.

Forestry Commission Report 2025

December, 2025

Overview

- This is the second year that the Forestry Commission will report on the health of the University City urban forest.
- The following slides are updated with another year's information on each of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

1. Canopy Coverage
2. Numbers of trees
3. Number of trees pruned, planted or removed
4. Tree species diversity
5. Tree size class distribution
6. Percentage of contract versus in-house work
7. State / County tree management
8. New planting areas established
9. Resident communication

The indicators measure areas of achievement and areas for improvement.

Canopy Coverage

Add next year's data and update comment

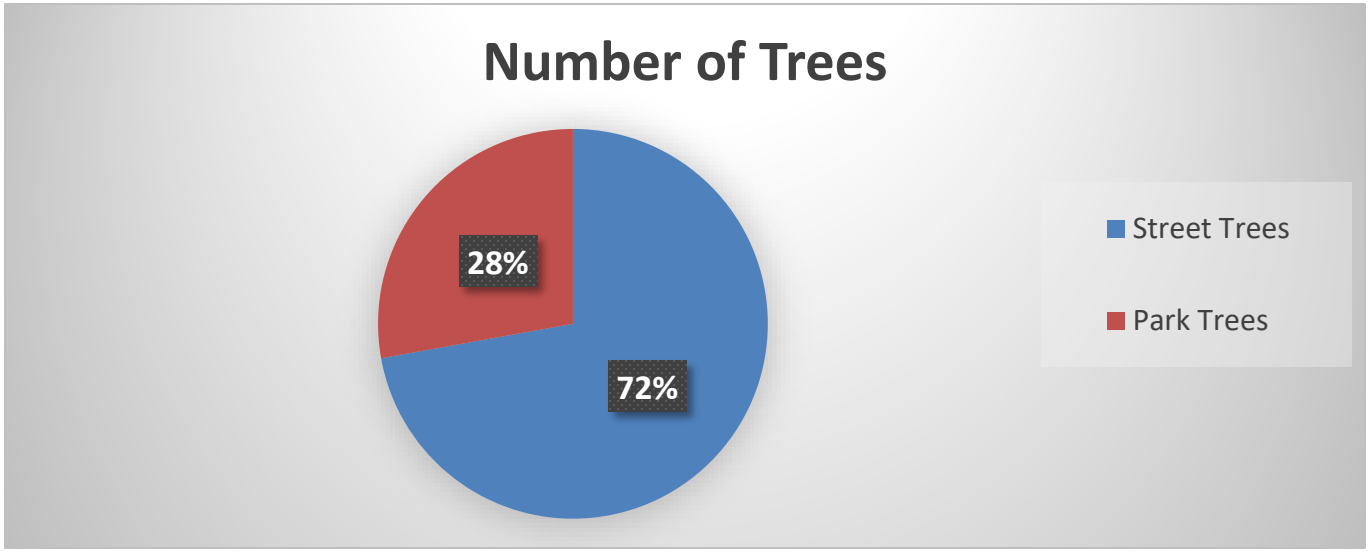
The goal of tree coverage supported by the National Forestry Service is 40%.

The Forestry Commission used the "I-Tree Canopy" tool to estimate the actual Canopy Coverage of University City is approximately 37%.

Update

Canopy coverage is a collaborative effort between the city and the residents.

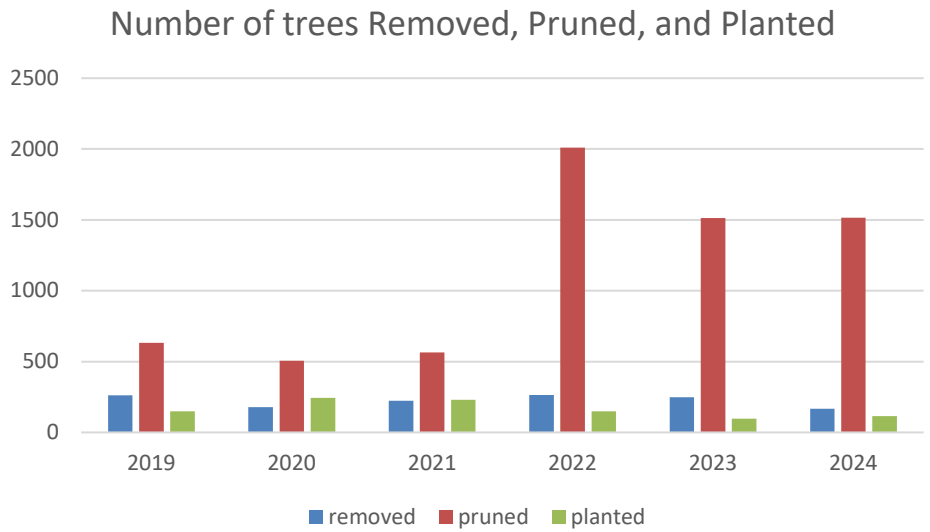
Number of Trees Maintained by Forestry



- 7,302 Street Trees
- 2,903 Park Trees (excludes Ruth Woods)

The current Forestry Department Staff oversees approximately 5000 trees per person.

Number of trees removed, pruned, and planted

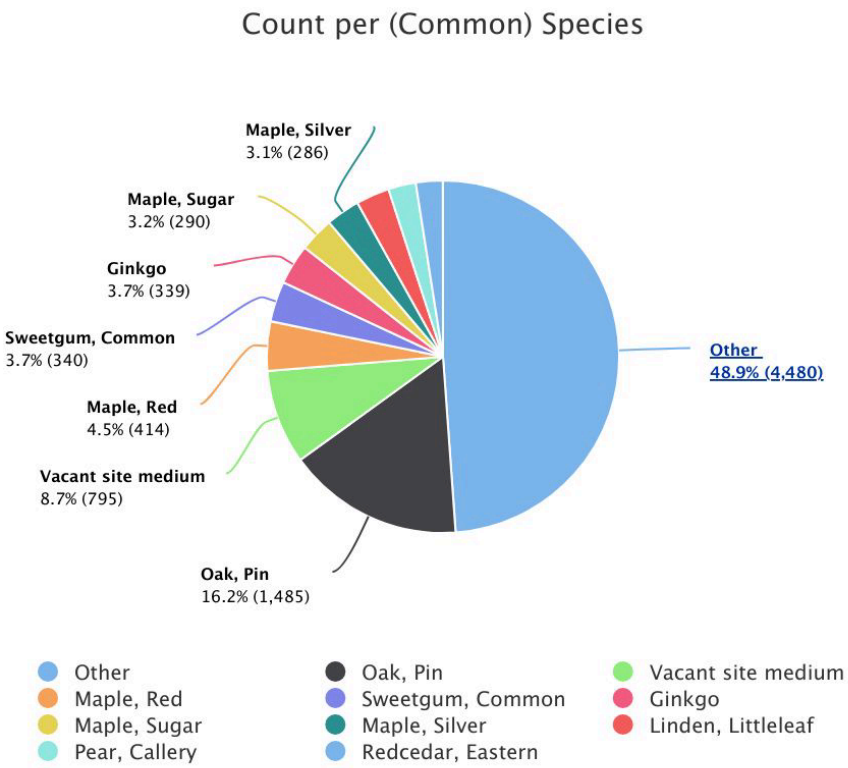


Number of trees pruned increased significantly in 2022 due to the addition of an annual pruning cycle.

- Pruning cycle is being done entirely by contractors.
- Planting is being done by in-house staff and has gone down due to being overwhelmed by storm cleanup and keeping up with removals.
- Removals are staying consistent with the allocation of more money for contractors.

The number of new trees planted has decreased over the last four years and is not keeping pace with needs.

Street tree species diversity



- 170 Different tree species managed on the streets

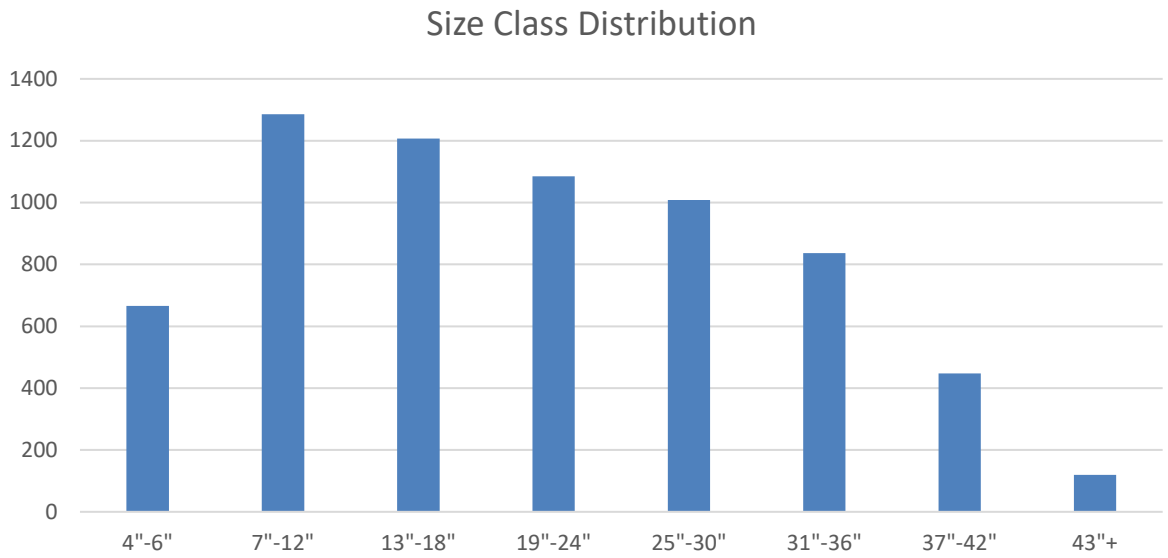
  Pin Oak is the number one species by count with 16% total

  Vacant sites are the next most prevalent

  Industry standard is no more that 10% of any tree species

Tree planting must fill the vacant tree sites and targeted replacements must improve the diversity.

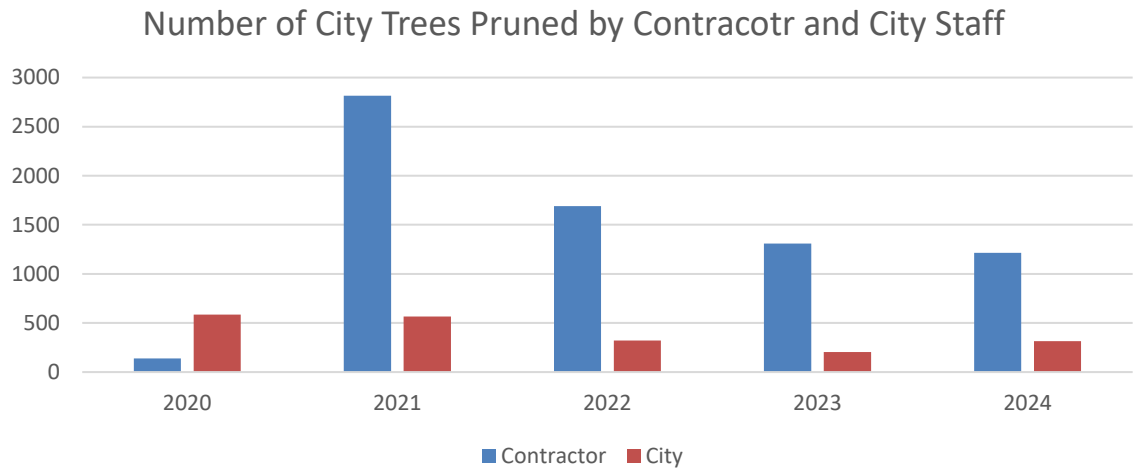
Tree Size Class Distribution



Size class distribution of a healthy urban forest should be a bell curve.

The Tree Size Class Distribution takes a generation to change and therefore must be monitored.

Percentage of contract versus in-house work. Pruning



- Pruning cycle started in 2021
- City staff decreased from 3 employees to 2 in 2020 and to 1 in 2024

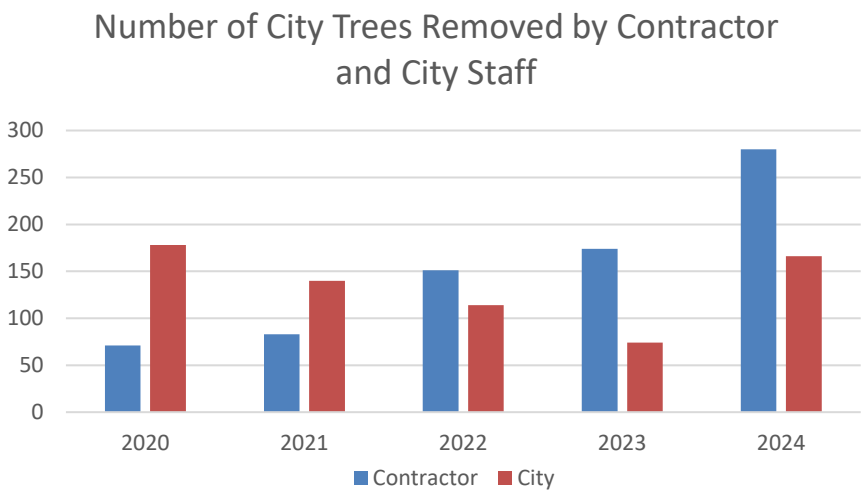
Outsourcing was necessary to initiate the program but, in-house pruning results in better quality.

Percentage of contract versus in-house work. Planting

- Ash tree removal and new species replacement is by outside contractors. This program expires in approximately 7 to 10 years.
- Staffing restrictions and storm cleanup limited planting time in 2022 and 2023.

Planting can be done by either contract or in-house employees but, in-house is preferred for quality

Percentage of contract versus in-house work. Removals



- More contract work done because of losing city staff
- Number of tree removals has stayed somewhat consistent

Removals can be effectively outsourced because it is easy to quantify a bid and the quality is not diminished.

State / County Tree Management

Some of the most high-profile tree lined streets in University City are not maintained by our Forestry Division because they are the responsibility of the County. These 519 trees equates to 7.6% of the street trees in U City.

The county prunes only on request, they remove when needed and do not replace trees. Trees are distributed as follows:

- Delmar – 230
- Hanley – 64
- Midland – 158
- North and South, McKnight, Pennsylvania and Vernon – 67

University City needs to take the responsibility for managing these trees in order to ensure good husbandry of this significant asset.

Currently no new planting areas have been established

Update

"Heat islands" form when pockets of hot air reflected from hard surfaces such as buildings and streets create an unusual body of heat. Addition tree canopy can mitigate heat islands.

St. Louis City has designated funds to identify heat islands and address them by establishing new planting areas.

University City also has areas that could be considered heat islands. Currently, we have no analysis of heat islands in our community.

The Commission recommends funding sources be identified to undertake a heat island study.

Resident Communication

Update

Canopy coverage is a collaborative effort between the city and the residents. The Commission has formed a sub-committee which has completed significant work on goals

- 15 topics have been identified
- Communication methods such as print media, social media and community communications have been identified
- Collaboration has begun between the Forestry Commission, Parks and Green Practices.

The Forestry Commission is looking forward to collaborating with the University City Communications Department.

Importance of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Update

Our summary evaluation is that insufficient resources have been allocated to grow our Forestry Division staff and to equip this staff to meet the goals defined by our KPIs.

Trees are a major value asset for University City and we have been taking them for granted. Planting and pruning are the best way to maintain this valuable asset. Trees take a long time to grow but can be lost more quickly if proper husbandry is not a habit.

The KPIs are designed to provide year to year consistent reporting to measure the health of our tree eco-system. As the concerns grow about climate change more investment in the Urban Forest is required.

Ongoing measurement will track the performance of our goals.

Major Issues Identified

Update

A. Forestry staff consists of 2 persons; often this is not sufficient to support needed maintenance let alone improvement of our KPIs
B. Forestry equipment is old and needs updating.
C. There are 462 planting sites where trees have been removed and have not been replaced.
D. There are 519 State / County street trees within U City that are not managed except for removal and storm damage clean up.
E. There is limited outreach to the community regarding the Forestry Division.
F. Current Storm Cleanup Policy for a major storms detracts from Forestry's daily mission.

The Forestry Commission recommends the City Council investigate possible funding sources to improve the Urban Forest of University City.

Forestry Commission Report 2025

Appendix

- Important Definitions
- Established Industry Standards

Important Definitions

- City of University City Tree Ordinance: University City Ordinance 6670
- City of University City Tree Manual: A companion to the Ordinance to aid in education
- Urban Forest: The care and management of single trees and populations in urban environments
- Canopy Coverage: The measurement of ground surface covered by the branch spread of trees
- Heat Islands: Infrastructure that absorbs the suns heat and reemits it into the atmosphere
- Standards: Established Goals for Urban Forests
- Key Performance Indicators: Methods of measurement of Goal achievement
- Tree Types
  - Street Tree: A tree located on the City right of way along a public street
  - Privately Owned trees: A tree located on private property and is not a City tree
  - Park Trees: Trees located in parks
  - Ruth Woods Trees: Trees located in Ruth Woods which are not generally maintained by Forestry
- Diameter at Breast Height: The size of a tree measured at 4.5 feet from the soil level
- New Planting Areas: Places where trees could be planted but, have not been inventoried
- Vacant Sites: Site used to have a tree but, it was removed and not replaced
- In-House Work: Work performed by University City Staff (or Volunteers)
- Contracted Work: Work performed by contractors hired by University City Forestry

Established Industry Standards

- Canopy Coverage-Previously set at 40% by United States Forest Service-Currently percent is set by the entity managing the urban forest
- Tree Species Diversity- Santamour 1990 no species should exceed 10%
- Pruning Cycle-Every 3-8 years based on when trees need structural pruning and deadwooding

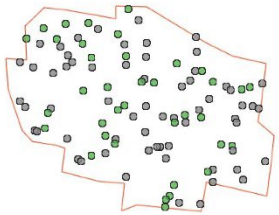
I-Tree Canopy

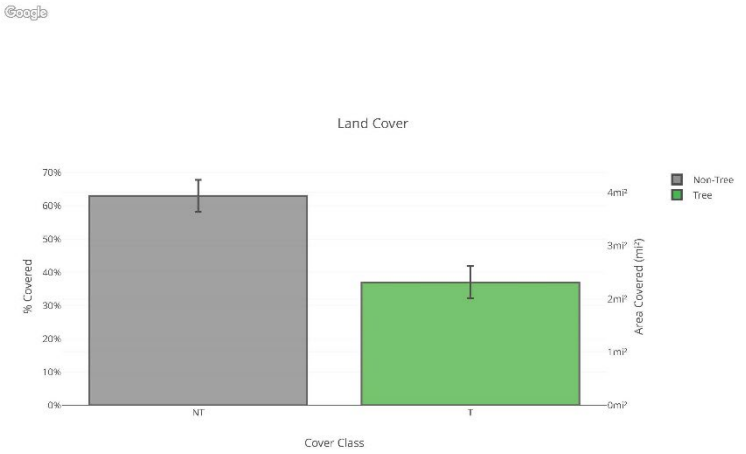
Update

i-Tree Canopy Report

i-Tree Benefits and Cover Assessment

Estimated using random sampling statistics on 12/8/2025





I-Tree Canopy

Update

Abbr.	Cover Class	Description	Points	% Cover ± SE	Area (mi²) ± SE
NT	Non-Tree	All other surfaces	63	63.00 ± 4.83	3.94 ± 0.30
T	Tree	Tree, non-shrub	37	37.00 ± 4.83	2.32 ± 0.30
Total			**100**	**100.00**	**6.26**

Tree Benefit Estimates: Carbon (English units)

Description	Carbon (oz)	±SE	CO_2 Equiv. (oz)	±SE	Value (USD)	±SE
Sequestered annually in trees	0.00	±0.00	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
Stored in trees (Note: this benefit is not an annual rate)	1,632,151,345.39	±212,975,594.91	5,984,554,933.11	±780,910,514.67	$0	±0

Currency is in USD and rounded. Standard errors of removal and benefit amounts are based on standard errors of sampled and classified points. Amount sequestered is based on 0.000 oz of Carbon, or 0.000 oz of CO_2, per mi²/yr and rounded. Amount stored is based on 704563331.072 oz of Carbon, or 2583398880.598 oz of CO_2, per mi² and rounded. Value (USD) is based on $0.00/oz of Carbon, or $0.00/oz of CO_2 and rounded. (English units: oz = ounces, mi² = square miles)

Tree Benefit Estimates: Air Pollution (English units)

Abbr.	Description	Amount (oz)	±SE	Value (USD)	±SE
CO	Carbon Monoxide removed annually	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
NO2	Nitrogen Dioxide removed annually	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
O3	Ozone removed annually	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
SO2	Sulfur Dioxide removed annually	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
PM2.5	Particulate Matter less than 2.5 microns removed annually	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
PM10*	Particulate Matter greater than 2.5 microns and less than 10 microns removed annually	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
Total		**0.00**	**±0.00**	**$0**	**±0**

Currency is in USD and rounded. Standard errors of removal and benefit amounts are based on standard errors of sampled and classified points. Air Pollution Estimates are based on these values in oz/mi²/yr @ $/oz/yr and rounded:
CO 0.000 @ $0.00 | NO2 0.000 @ $0.00 | O3 0.000 @ $0.00 | SO2 0.000 @ $0.00 | PM2.5 0.000 @ $0.00 | PM10* 0.000 @ $0.00 (English units: oz = ounces, mi² = square miles)

Tree Benefit Estimates: Hydrological (English units)

Abbr.	Benefit	Amount (oz)	±SE	Value (USD)	±SE
AVRO	Avoided Runoff	0.00	±0.00	$0	±0
E	Evaporation	0.00	±0.00	N/A	N/A
I	Interception	0.00	±0.00	N/A	N/A
T	Transpiration	0.00	±0.00	N/A	N/A
PE	Potential Evaporation	0.00	±0.00	N/A	N/A
PET	Potential Evapotranspiration	0.00	±0.00	N/A	N/A

Currency is in USD and rounded. Standard errors of removal and benefit amounts are based on standard errors of sampled and classified points. Hydrological Estimates are based on these values in oz/mi²/yr @ $/oz/yr and rounded:
AVRO 0.000 @ $0.00 | E 0.000 @ N/A | I 0.000 @ N/A | T 0.000 @ N/A | PE 0.000 @ N/A | PET 0.000 @ N/A (English units: oz = ounces, mi² = square miles)

About i-Tree Canopy

The concept and prototype of this program were developed by David J. Nowak, Jeffery T. Walton, and Eric J. Greenfield (USDA Forest Service). The current version of this program was developed and adapted to i-Tree by David Ellingsworth, Mike Binkley, and Scott Maco (The Davey Tree Expert Company)

Limitations of i-Tree Canopy

The accuracy of the analysis depends upon the ability of the user to correctly classify each point into its correct class. As the number of points increase, the precision of the estimate will increase as the standard error of the estimate will decrease. If too few points are classified, the standard error will be too high to have any real certainty of the estimate.