

HEALTHY URBAN FORESTS

An urban forest includes all trees and other vegetation in and around a city, village, or development. Maintaining a healthy urban forest requires a plan with strong implementation measures to ensure that the ecological, social, and economic benefits these forests provide are seen by the community into the future.

Some Reasons to Plan for a Healthy Urban Forest

- Ecologically, urban forests soften the impact of downpours by allowing water to recharge back into the earth. This also reduces runoff, flooding, and sedimentation.
- Socially, urban forests create a sense of community where people can recreate, socialize, or rest.
- Economically, urban forests help reduce energy costs by providing shade in the summer and insulation in the winter. Additionally, people tend to shop and linger more along tree-lined streets and prefer to live in scenic areas.
- With increases in development and urbanization, communities must meet the needs of residents by offering them green space for recreational, social, and aesthetic needs.
- Invasive species threaten urban forests and other vegetation in the community.

Tools to Address Healthy Urban Forests Across all Elements of Your Comprehensive Plan

- Create an urban forest management plan to emphasize the benefits of urban trees.
- Require contractors to mitigate any negative impacts to urban forests.
- Create incentives for private developers to preserve and expand the number of existing trees on their property.
- Require the use of native species in plantings and consider ways to control the spread of invasive species that can have negative ecological, economic, and social impacts to urban forests.
- Create or review existing tree ordinances and guidelines to ensure that they meet your community's goals for managing your urban forest.
- Consider the concept of Green Infrastructure—strategically planned and locally managed networks of protected green space with multiple purposes.



For more planning tools go to the
**Smart Forestry for Smart Growth
Planner's Toolbox**

on the web at

<http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/SmartForestry/toolbox/>

