

Minneapolis Tree Advisory Commission

ANNUAL REPORT



Presented to Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board
August 18, 2021

Minneapolis Tree Advisory Commission

2021 members

- Peggy Booth, citizen **Chair**
- Peter MacDonagh, UMN rep **Co-chair**
- Amy Simso Dean, citizen
- Giuseppe Marrari, citizen
- Susan Olmsted, citizen
- Carol Sersland, citizen
- Don Willeke, Mayor's designee
- Steve Nicholson, Mn Shade Tree Comm.
- Chris Meyer, MPRB Board
- Ralph Sievert, MPRB Forestry
- Steve Collin, Mpls Public Works
- Robin Garwood, City Council designee

Assisted by Philip Potyondy, MPRB



Report Topics

- State of the Urban Forest
- Recommendations



State of the Minneapolis Urban Forest

- **Challenges**
- **Opportunities**
- **Successes**

Challenges

Drought and Heat

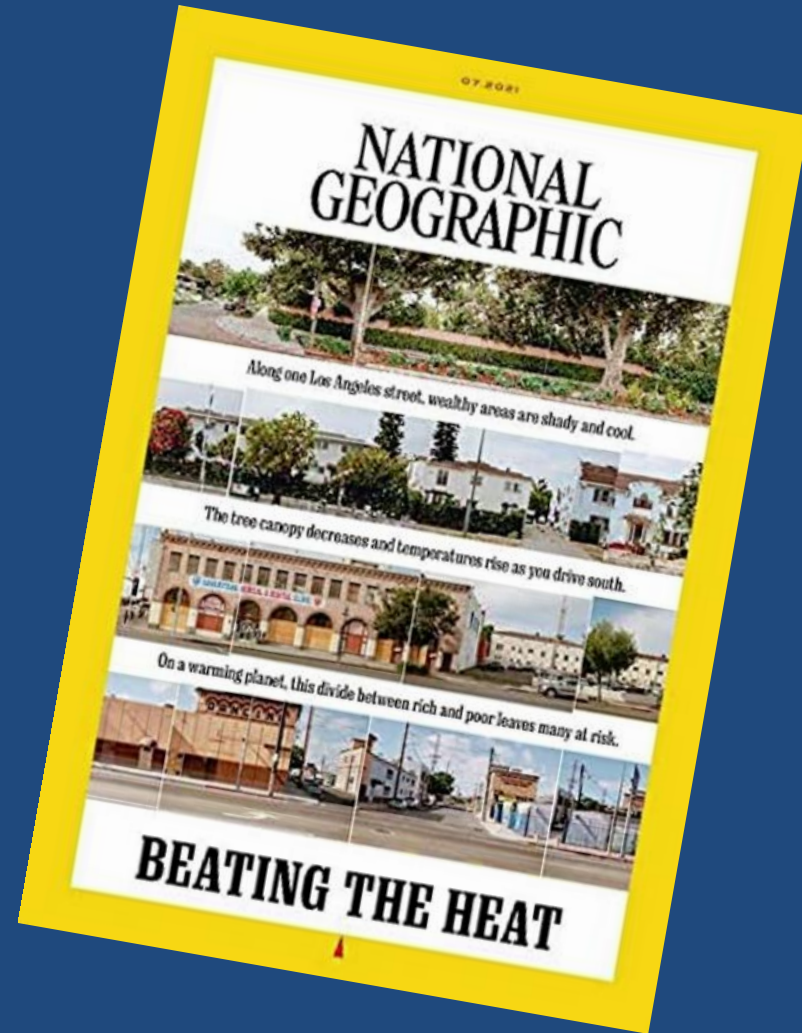
- We've faced record breaking early drought & excess heat
- Critically impacting young trees in Minneapolis
- Many will die



Challenges

Without Trees...People Suffer

- Media attention is increasingly on the value of tree canopy cover in cities...
- And impacts from lack of tree canopy
- Nationally, it's cover story of July *National Geographic*



Challenges

Without Trees...People Suffer

- Locally, MPR Angela Davis featured it 3 weeks ago

MPR News with Angela Davis

Why we need trees in Minnesota cities

Angela Davis and Maja Beckstrom July 30, 2021



A crew from the Minneapolis Park Board removes ash tree branches along Grand Avenue in 2016. The crew removed ash trees as part of a plan to harvest boulevard ash trees as emerald ash borer spreads and replant with more diverse species. ■ Elizabeth Dunbar | MPR News 2016



MPR News with Angela Davis - Why we need trees in Minnesota cities

Share



If this heat wave had you ducking from the sun, you may have a new appreciation for how shady your neighborhood is — or isn't.

A leafy tree canopy can keep temperatures cooler by nearly 10 degrees compared to nearby paved areas. And trees have other benefits, too: keeping the air cleaner, raising property values and even reducing crime.

But not all neighborhoods are equal when it comes to trees. A [new report from the nonprofit American Forests](#) finds that neighborhoods with more low-income households and people of color tend to have fewer trees.

Achieving tree equity has become more important in the context of climate change, and it's become a bigger challenge [as cities cut down thousands of ash trees](#) sickened by the emerald ash borer.

Opportunities

More Trees – Helps Kids

Green urban landscapes and school-level academic performance

Summary

Higher levels of tree canopy are linked to higher school-level reading test scores

Trees set sixth-graders up for success

Date: November 9, 2020

Source: University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

Summary: The transition to middle school is undeniably tough for many sixth-graders, even in the best of times. Mounting academic demands, along with changes in peer dynamics and the onset of puberty, result in a predictable and sometimes irreversible slump in academic performance. A new study suggests an unexpected but potentially potent remedy: trees.

Opportunities

Youth Involvement with Trees

- More opportunities exist than ever for city youth to gain through trees ...
- IF we have someone to connect them



By equipping participants with training and hands-on experience, Tree Trust Career Pathways offers promising young people the opportunity to build sustainable and meaningful careers.

FIGHT FOR
CLIMATE JUSTICE

JOIN THE TAZO TREE CORPS

APPLY NOW

THE CLIMATE CRISIS IS ALREADY HERE.

It's easy to think of the climate crisis like some slowly creeping monster that inches closer with every reckless decision we make for our planet. Truth is, for many Americans, climate change is already here. In fact, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities across the country have been disproportionately impacted for decades.



University of Minnesota
Youth Engagement
In Arboriculture

Successes

MPRB Leadership

MPRB is commended for sustaining & replanting trees across the city...



Successes

MPRB Leadership

This year completes implementation of the 7-year Ash Canopy Replacement Plan ...

Funded by Tree Preservation & Reforestation Levy



Successes

MPRB Leadership

... through this initiative:

- 40,000 new trees of 200 different types replaced 40,000 public ash facing inevitable death



**No other
Minnesota
city has
achieved this**

Successes

MPRB Leadership

... through this initiative:

- Young trees received cost-effective care over last 7 years



Early structural pruning saves thousands of \$\$ over time

Successes

MPRB Leadership

MPRB Operations/Forestry is commended for its new public tree watering strategies

- 7 new 500 gallon water tanks added
- Overtime hours approved in key times
- Over 36,000 tree waterings done



Recommendations



Recommendations

1. Engage Youth & Volunteers

Hire Forestry Outreach Coordinator



**To link youth to
outstanding jobs
& programs -
we need the
Outreach
Coordinator**

Recommendations

1. Engage Youth & Volunteers

Hire Forestry Outreach Coordinator

- Approved 2 years ago – but hiring halted due to COVID19
- Hiring process should resume to fill position in early 2022 to work with youth this school year
- Allocate ongoing base funding



Recommendations

1. Engage Youth & Volunteers

Forestry Outreach Coordinator crucial to:

- Launch youth-focused hands-on careers in urban forestry program in Minneapolis



Recommendations

1. Engage Youth & Volunteers

Forestry Outreach Coordinator crucial to:

- Involve youth & school kids in tree projects & education



Recommendations

1. Engage Youth & Volunteers

Forestry Outreach Coordinator crucial to:



- **Connect Minneapolis youth to the new state Community Forestry Environmental Justice program**

Recommendations

1. Engage Youth & Volunteers

Forestry Outreach Coordinator crucial to:

- In working with youth & communities to create a Minneapolis urban orchard project



Recommendations

1. Engage Youth & Volunteers

Forestry Outreach Coordinator crucial to:

- Partner with community groups & business
- Resume & expand Citizen Pruner program
- Increase forestry unpaid volunteers to thousands of hours per year



Recommendations

2. Plant & Care for Young Trees

Plant 10,000 new trees per year

- Needed to fill vacant public tree spaces
- More tree canopy is essential for human health & environmental justice



Recommendations

2. Plant & Care for Young Trees

Provide essential care to all young trees

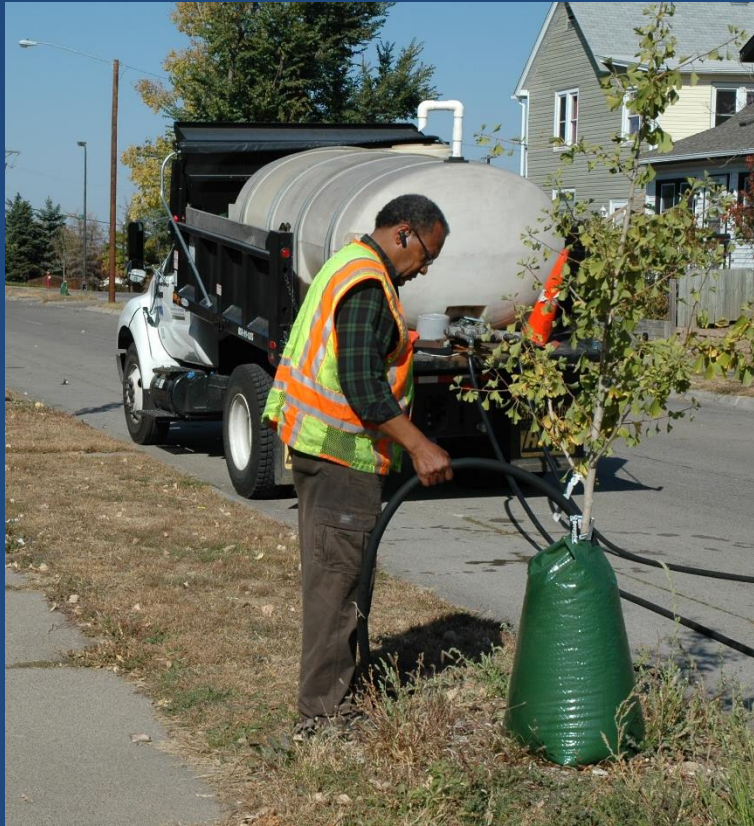
- All urban trees need proper structural pruning in 1st 10 years
- Without it, trees die sooner or cost more
- Young tree care saves money



Recommendations

2. Plant & Care for Young Trees

Provide base funding to continue Forestry tree care operations



- Tree planting & care levy expires in 2021
- Unless \$2M/year more is secured, tree planting will drop by ~50% & tree care by arborists will decrease by 9% risking survival of new trees

A photograph of two young girls kneeling on a grassy field, watering a newly planted tree. The girl on the left is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and blue pants, while the girl on the right is wearing a purple t-shirt and blue jeans. Both are holding white buckets and pouring water onto the base of the tree. The background shows a clear blue sky, green trees, and a baseball field in the distance.

Recap of Recommendations

Minneapolis Tree Advisory Commission

2021 Recommendations

✓ **Strategically engage youth & volunteers in tree programs**

Hire Forestry Outreach Coordinator early in 2022

Launch careers in urban forestry program in Minneapolis

Link Minneapolis youth to state & national tree programs

✓ **Plant & care for young trees**

Plant 10,000 new trees per year

Provide essential care to all young trees

Provide \$2M more in base funding to sustain tree planting & care

Minneapolis Tree Advisory Commission

THANK YOU

Any questions?

