



STREET TREES & URBAN FORESTS BENEFITS AND IMPLEMENTATION

All of the trees in our neighborhoods, parks, and backyards comprise what is called the urban forest, or a community forest. The trees and plants we include in our homes and parks are an invaluable part of our urban landscape.

Benefits of Urban Trees

Water Quality

Street trees intercept thousands of gallons of rainwater per tree, reducing stormwater runoff and removing pollutants.

Air Quality

Trees work to remove pollutants from the air, as dust and other particulates that cause respiratory illness.

Wildlife Habitat

Urban forests provide food and cover for hundreds of species, including birds, insects, and mammals.

Decreased Heat Island Effect

Summer temperatures can be abnormally high as concrete and rooftops warm in urban areas. Temperatures can be significantly reduced by the shade and evaporative cooling provided by trees.

Increased Economic Return

Maintaining an urban forest has initial costs but the economic return in ecological services (such as air and water quality) outweighs the initial investment.

Higher Property Values

Trees, parks, and open space are often key selling features of homes. Research suggests a direct correlation between healthy neighborhood trees and

the value of the surrounding homes.

Combating Climate Change

Trees absorb atmospheric carbon dioxide in their tissue, reducing the amount of emissions in the air.

Sense of Community

Green space, parks, and old trees add character, increasing community pride and identity.

Health Benefits

Trails, walking paths, and inviting landscapes can encourage physical activity.

Improved Business

Research from the University of Washington suggests that people are willing to spend more time and money in downtown areas that have healthy trees.



Urban Trees in Downtown Medford.

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The Right Tree in the Right Place

Traffic, heat, concrete, and pollutants are just a few of the challenges to urban trees. Matching the best tree species to a site will go a long way in ensuring the long-term survival of the tree and will reduce maintenance. Some considerations for planting:

- Plant a diversity of species. This will help the trees resist disease, and attract more wildlife.
- Consider the tree's moisture, soil, and heat requirements. Consider planting native tree species that are naturally adapted to the area's climate.
- Look for species that are proven to be non-invasive.
- Pay attention to the types of fruits and seeds your tree will produce. Fruits attract wildlife but can be messy.
- Consider what the plant will look like in different seasons. Will it have bright fall color? Will it bloom in spring?
- Know the tree's mature height and shape and plan to give it plenty of room to grow.
- Look for long-lived, disease resistant, strong trees.

What You Can Do

Plant a Tree

One of the best places to start is your own backyard. Visit local nurseries and pick out your favorite tree to plant. Make sure it is one that will work for your site!

Participate in a Restoration Project

There are many projects going on in Jackson County to restore stream banks, wetlands, and forest habitat. Check out Rogue River Watershed Council and other nonprofit groups to learn about current projects and volunteer opportunities.

Jackson Soil & Water Conservation District
89 Alder Street, Central Point, OR 97502
Phone: 541-423-6159 Website: jswcd.org

Neighborhood Street Tree Program

Your neighborhood is an excellent place to contribute to the urban forest. Ask your neighbors to participate in a Neighborhood Planting Project.

For Medford residents, the Neighborhood Street Tree Partnership program can help you organize, fund, and design your project. Contact the City of Medford at 541-774-2690 for more information.

Not in Medford? Contact JSWCD to get started.



Urban Trees on the SOU Campus.