



Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

THE CITIZEN FORESTER

Urban & Community Forestry Program

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Massachusetts



New Faces from Old Places

A new chapter has started this month for DCR Urban and Community Forestry, with the departure of long-time Community Action Forester, Mollie Freilicher. Taking over for Mollie, will be another long-time member of the DCR U&CF team, Mathew Cahill. Coming from the Greater Boston area, Mathew was coordinating the Greening the Gateways Cities Program since its inception in 2014, and worked at the Asian Longhorned Beetle Reforestation Program in 2013. Prior to joining the DCR, he was the Urban Forestry Program Coordinator for Boston Natural Areas Network.

Mathew graduated from the State University of New York (SUNY) College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and started as a traditional forester in upstate NY, before moving to NYC to begin his career in urban forestry. He is an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist and has over 20 years of urban forestry experience.

He can be reached at mathew.cahill@mass.gov



Past and present Community Action Foresters, tree planting, circa 2019:
Mathew Cahill (far left), Mollie Freilicher (far right)

Baker-Polito Administration Celebrates 30,000th Tree Planting of the Greening the Gateway Cities Program



Governor Charlie Baker (2nd right) EEA Secretary Kathleen Theoharides (middle) and DCR Commissioner Jim Montgomery (3rd left) help plant the 30,000th tree in Westfield.

\$245,000 Awarded to Support Local Tree Planting Efforts

WESTFIELD – As part of the Baker-Polito Administration's celebration of Climate Week in Massachusetts, on September 23, 2021 Governor Charlie Baker joined Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides, DCR Commissioner Jim Montgomery, and state and local officials to plant the milestone 30,000th tree through the Commonwealth's Greening the Gateway Cities Program in the City of Westfield's General Shepard Park.

Additionally, the Administration announced the award of \$245,000 in grants to 14 municipalities and non-profit organizations through the program that will support broader tree planting efforts and build the capacity and partnerships needed to make communities more resilient to climate change.

"The planting of 30,000 trees by the Greening the Gateway Cities Program serves as a great example of what can be achieved when state government, municipalities, and dedicated non-profit organizations work together on behalf of the public," **said Governor Charlie Baker.** "This kind of collaboration is more important than ever as we work to address climate change and the increasing heat and storm intensity that comes with it, which is why our Administration has proposed a significant investment in climate resiliency and open space through our federal ARPA spending proposal."

"Through this longstanding, successful program, we are expanding green space and improving public health in our underserved communities," **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito.** "The grants awarded today will help our communities generate local interest and develop a network of community volunteers that will help us pursue a significant expansion of tree canopy that will directly benefit the public now and well into the future."

The Administration awarded grants to seven non-profit organizations to conduct resident outreach and



promote awareness of the program, and seven municipalities to help their public works departments collaborate with the tree planting program.

"As climate change leads to longer and more intense heat waves, programs like Greening the Gateway Cities help us address the urban heat island effect by expanding tree canopy that cleans our air, provides cooling and shade, and makes our neighborhoods more beautiful," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides.** "The Baker-Polito Administration has supported a

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significant expansion of this successful program since coming into office because it advances critical priorities that we share with our communities, including environmental justice, equity, and using nature-based solutions to make our Gateway Cities more resilient to the impacts of climate change.”



The Greening the Gateway Cities Program (GGCP) is a partnership between the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA), the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s (DCR) Urban & Community Forestry Program, the Department of Energy Resources (DOER), and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), along with Gateway Cities and local grassroots organizations. Notably, the

program utilizes trees to cool neighborhoods and reduce the “urban heat island” effect where large areas of pavement cause significantly hotter living conditions. The tree plantings are also focused within Environmental Justice neighborhoods – areas with over 25% of residents who are low income, minority, or non-English speaking.

DCR foresters work with neighborhood non-profit organizations to help with outreach and community support. Extensive tree planting in local neighborhoods addresses climate justice by giving residents the same access to cool greenspace and shade as other communities. The program also strives to reduce energy use by shading and sheltering neighborhoods and to reduce flooding by soaking up stormwater.

The Commonwealth continues to make investments in the state’s natural resources by promoting the Greening the Gateway Cities Program. More trees across the Commonwealth will improve the air we breathe, reduce energy consumption, and beautify our neighborhoods.

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Through the Greening the Gateway Cities Program, the state will invest \$5 million over the next year in state capital and energy efficiency funds to plant about 8,000 trees averaging six feet in height within fourteen gateway cities. The program will not only produce energy savings, but will also benefit the local economy and create jobs by hiring foresters and tree planting crews from the cities where planting takes place. The program trains crews in proper tree planting and care and many employees find permanent work in the landscaping industry. The GGCP is expected to yield more than twice the investment made by the Administration in energy cost saving for residents and businesses as the trees mature.

“On behalf of the people of Westfield I would like to thank the Baker Administration, Secretary Theoharides and Commissioner Montgomery for their dedication to green our older communities,” **said Westfield Mayor Don Humason.** “I’d like to congratulate the Commonwealth on this

important milestone of 30,000 trees planted as part of the Greening the Gateway Cities program. Westfield is proud of its yearly designation as a Tree City and delighted to be a part of this vibrant program.”

“The Greening the Gateway Cities Program has brought new trees and enormous benefits to urban residential areas across our entire Commonwealth,” **said State Senator John Velis (D-Westfield).** “With increased tree canopy cover, communities like Westfield can reduce household heating and cooling energy use and can provide cleaner air, water, and an overall better quality of life for residents. General Shepard Park and our entire Westfield community will



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benefit from the trees being planted today for years to come.”

“The trees in our city are such a great asset, and I'm thankful that we're able to bring in more green to brighten up the community,” **said State Representative Kelly Pease (R-Westfield).**

With a defined goal to increase the urban tree canopy to 5-10 percent in select neighborhoods in each Gateway City, the program is expected to reduce heating and cooling costs by approximately \$230 a year for an average household once the trees reach maturity. To date, the program has planted almost 30,000 trees in 18 Gateway Cities – the equivalent of adding 550 acres, or nearly one square mile, of new forest to these cities. Residents who sign-up for the GGCP will be provided planted trees at no cost as long as they commit to watering the trees for two years.

For more information and to see if you are in one of our active planting zones, visit: MAurbancanopy.org



During this year's Climate Week in Massachusetts, the Baker-Polito Administration highlighted its commitment to reducing emissions, mitigating the impacts of climate change, and building a more resilient Commonwealth. Events for important initiatives included:

- Offshore Wind
- Land Protection and Conservation
- Greening the Gateway Cities
- Clean Energy Expansion

The Administration has also highlighted the urgent demand for funding to support climate resiliency in Massachusetts, and Governor Baker's [plan](#) to immediately put to use part of Commonwealth's direct federal aid from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to support critical priorities in cities and towns.

The Administration's plan would commit **\$900 million** to key energy and environmental initiatives.

<https://www.mass.gov/news/baker-polito-administration-celebrates-30000th-greening-the-gateway-cities-program-tree-planting>



CLIMATE RESILIENCY

Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) Launches Climate Resilient Land Use

MAPC has a new online resource with the tools your community needs to combat the growing impact of rainstorms, sea level rise, heat, and drought.

It features regulatory language from MAPC municipalities and beyond, background information, and resources – on floodplain and wetlands restrictions, tree protection and water conservation, design standards, and zoning incentives. New information is being added all the time.

Does your community have regulations that should be included? Is there something you would like to see on the website? Let them know!

One of the nine categories includes Tree Protection Regulations, which has strategies to strengthen tree protection. View the tree related information here:

<https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/tree-regulations/>

"Climate Resilient Land Use Strategies" provides specific language examples in nine categories:



Tree Stewards Training 2021

GARDNER - The signs of fall are all around us. The cooling temperatures, the shorter days, the iconic New England fall foliage, and of course, the DCR Urban and Community Forestry Program's annual Tree Stewards Training class.



Back in an abbreviated format since its COVID hiatus, this year's training was held at Dunn State Park in Gardner, MA. Attendees from 20 communities came with a variety of backgrounds, ranging from tree committee member, to non-profit organization, to municipal staff. Each person, however, brought their interest in trees and a desire to expand their tree care skills and knowledge.

This year's topics included Pruning Trees, Site Selection & Proper Tree

Planting Techniques, and Funding for Urban and Community Forestry.

The tree pruning class was lead by Jen Kettell of Radiant Leaf Consulting (<https://radiantleaf.com/>). Jen's inspired training took participants through all aspects of growth and development, to help participants understand not just the "how" to prune but also the "why" to prune.

Participants were encouraged through a hands-on approach, where they were able to practice their skill on young trees that would then be planted at the park.

The tree planting class was lead by DCR Community Action Forester Mathew Cahill. Instruction included "Right Tree, Right Place" selection, common issues with nursery stock, and proper planting practices. Again, a hands-on session got participants into the action, and left them with a new appreciation for the importance of finding that root flare!





Tree City USA/Tree Campus Higher Education/Tree Line 2021 online application portal now open. Our deadline is December 31, 2021. Of note and due to covid, Arbor day celebrations have been waived this year however a proclamation is required.



TREE CITY USA®

November 4	Webinar: Urban Forestry Today 12pm(EST) Wildlife Management in Urban Forests & Urban Landscapes
November 15-16	Conference: Society of Municipal Arborists (SMA) 57th Annual International Urban Forestry Conference and Trade Show, Louisville, Kentucky
November 16	Webinar: The TREE Fund 1pm (EST) Growing trees in paved sites
November 16	Conference: Alliance for Community Trees Day Louisville, Kentucky
November 17-18	Conference: 2021 Partners in Community Forestry Louisville, Kentucky
November 19	Conference: Urban Wood Network Academy Louisville, Kentucky
December 13-16	Conference: 2021 ISA International Virtual Conference
January 11 - 12, 2022	Conference: MA Tree Wardens and Foresters Association Sturbridge, MA
January 12, 2022	Webinar: Forest Service's Urban Forest Connections 1:00-2:15pm (EST)
Spring, 2022	UMass University Without Walls: Sensible Pruning for Beginners and Experts. Info: Dr. Brian Kane bkane@umass.edu



Pardon our dust, while the Citizen Forester undergoes a transition.

- Some of your favorite features will be returning in a new format, while others will be changing into new features!
- DCR continues to make improvements to enhance accessibility for all readers.
- We will be working to make past Species Spotlights searchable and available online.
- The Citizen Forester will move from a monthly publication to quarterly, for Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter!





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