

# URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY IN MASSACHUSETTS



## How the Urban & Community Forestry Program can work with your community

### What We Do

The Massachusetts Urban and Community Forestry Program (UCF) assists communities and organizations in protecting, growing, and managing community trees and forests. The goal of UCF is to improve the environment and enhance the livability of all Massachusetts communities.

UCF works with communities of all sizes to provide:

- Annual Grants
- Technical assistance
- Training
- Recognition awards

### What are Urban and Community Forests?

Urban and community forests are the trees, plants, and associated ecosystems anywhere people are – country roads in rural towns, developments in the suburbs, or densely populated neighborhoods in cities. Our landscape is a continuum from rural forest to city center. We all live, work, play, and learn all along this continuum.

#### **Urban and Community Forestry is Not Just about Trees.**

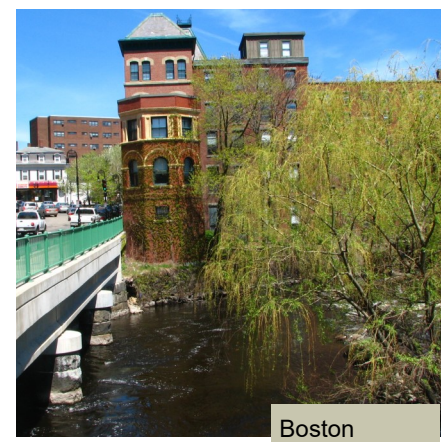
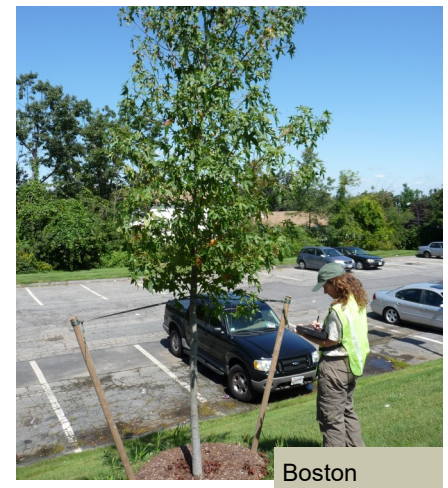
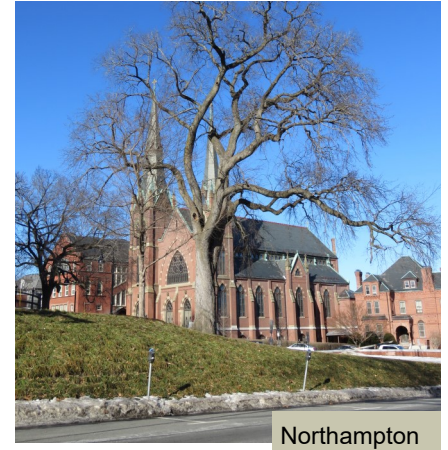
Trees and shrubs along streets, in parks, or in cultivated landscapes are prominent features of the urban forest. But there's more to a forest than just trees. The other plants, soils, air, and water that are part of the community make up an ecological system that supports wildlife, a clean environment, and a healthy home for humans.

#### **The Urban Forest Affects the Quality of Our Lives.**

The health of urban and community forest ecosystems affects the quality of the water we drink, the air we breathe, the stability of our neighborhoods, our mental health, and our sense of community. Trees provide a variety of benefits in our communities, from mitigating stormwater runoff, capturing particulate matter on their leaves, to shading buildings and reducing summertime energy usage, and more.

#### **Community Forestry Builds Stronger Communities.**

The most important aspect of Urban and Community Forestry is "community." Planting trees, gardening, teaching young people about nature, or creating a land use plan all bring diverse members of





our communities together. They strengthen our bond to the landscape and improve the well-being of the community. As our urban and community forests grow, so too does our sense of pride, our local economy, and our quality of life.

An excellent urban and community forestry program uses coordinated community resources to effectively protect, grow, and manage community trees. Coordination helps maximize the social, economic, and environmental benefits that the urban and community forest provides.

The Massachusetts UCF Program and the USDA Forest Service have developed criteria that can help indicate a strong program. In fact, the USDA Forest Service monitors each state's performance based on how many communities are meeting these standards.

## What Makes a Strong Urban and Community Forestry Program?

- **Management Plans:** Based on a resource assessment that guides the development of the urban forest resource.
- **Professional Staffing:** Degree in natural resource management, International Society of Arboriculture or Massachusetts Certified Arborist, Massachusetts Qualified Tree Warden.
- **Ordinances/ Policies/Regulations:** UCF program follows and enforces all local or statewide laws that focus on protecting urban forest.
- **Advocacy & Advisory Organizations:** Actively work with a tree commission or non-profit organization chartered to advocate for the community's urban forest.
- **Inter-Agency Coordination:** Regularly coordinate with multiple agencies (planning board, highway department, conservation commission, utilities, and others).
- **Tree City USA:** A strong UCF program will have achieved Tree City USA status.

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### Bureau of Forestry

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