



## URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY

### What we Do

The Massachusetts Urban and Community Forestry Program assists communities and nonprofit groups in protecting, growing, and managing community trees and forest ecosystems, with the ultimate aim of improving the environment and enhancing livability of all of Massachusetts' communities.

We work with communities of all sizes throughout Massachusetts to provide:

- Grants
- Technical assistance
- Training
- Recognition awards

The program also provides guidance on urban forestry policy issues at the state level.

### What is Urban and Community Forestry?

Urban and community forests are the trees, plants, and associated ecosystems anywhere where people are - country roads in rural towns, new developments in the suburbs, or concrete neighborhoods in cities and old mill towns. Our landscape is a continuum from rural forest to city center. We 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 the most prominent features of the urban and community forest. But there's more to a forest than just the 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 Health of the Urban Forest Affects the Quality of Our Lives.** Would you rather live on a street lined with beautiful trees, or one without green? 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, and our sense of community and individual pride.

**Community Forestry Builds Stronger Communities.** The most important aspect of Urban and Community Forestry is "community." Planting trees, gardening, teaching young people about nature, creating a land use plan – these activities bring diverse members of our communities together, strengthen our bond to the landscape, and improve the quality of life for the benefit of the whole community. As our urban and community forests grow, so too does our sense of pride, our local economy, and our quality of life.





## Massachusetts Urban & Community Forestry Program

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An excellent urban and community forestry program uses coordinated community resources to efficiently and effectively grow, protect, and manage community trees in a way that maximizes the social, economic, and environmental benefits that the urban and community forest provides to all residents.

The Massachusetts DCR Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) Program and the USDA Forest Service have developed some standards 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. Massachusetts will receive more federal dollars, as more communities achieve these standards.



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

- 1. Management Plans:** Based on a resource assessment that guides the development of the urban forest resource
- 2. Professional Staffing:** Degree in natural resource management, International Society of Arboriculture or Massachusetts Certified Arborist, participation in MTWFA Professional Development Series
- 3. Ordinances/ Policies/ Regulations:** UCF program follows and enforces all local or state-wide ordinances that focus on protecting urban forest.
- 4. Advocacy & Advisory Organizations:** Actively work with citizen or non-profit organizations such as tree boards and tree commissions that are chartered to advocate for the community's urban forest
- 5. Inter-Agency Coordination:** Regularly coordinate with multiple agencies such as the planning board, highway department, conservation commission, and utilities
- 6. Tree City USA:** A strong U&CF program will have achieved Tree City USA status.

### Contact us to talk about urban and community forestry in your community:

**Julie Coop**  
Urban and Community Forester  
Boston  
617-626-1468  
[julie.coop@state.ma.us](mailto:julie.coop@state.ma.us)

**Mollie Freilicher**  
Community Action Forester  
Amherst  
413-577-2966  
[mollie.freilicher@state.ma.us](mailto:mollie.freilicher@state.ma.us)

Bureau of Forestry  
Urban & Community Forestry Program  
Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation  
251 Causeway Street, Suite 600, Boston, MA 02114  
<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/>

In Partnership with:  
USDA Forest Service and  
the Massachusetts Tree Wardens' &  
Foresters' Association



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