

The Faces of Urban Forestry



Dave Dvorak
City Councilmember



Trees Create Healthy Outdoor Spaces for Families

Protecting existing trees and planting new ones are both important in Polk City, a community of 3,500 that is growing rapidly.

"I've learned how important trees are to this community," said David Dvorak, a member of the Polk City Council. "We plan development around trees, not trees around developments." To that end, city officials make a concerted effort to blend the built environment into the natural beauty that surrounds the town.

Planting new trees is also important. As the community's 10-acre sports complex was being developed, existing trees were supplemented with plantings around parking lots, dugouts, player benches and walkways. "We didn't want it to be just another sports complex," says David.

In addition to providing beauty and aesthetic value, the shade from trees also shields young children from the hot Iowa sun. The trees make the sports complex a safe outdoor space where families want to be.

Much of the planting is done by the Polk City Arbor League that has acted for 18 years as the community's tree board and a catalyst for volunteer projects.

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A joint project of U.S. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry, the National Association of State Foresters, and the Arbor Day Foundation. For more information visit arborday.org/faces