

The Faces of Urban Forestry



Dr. Hugh Burroughs Church Pastor

Roswell,
New Mexico



Trees Maintain Desert Town's Historic Character

Roswell, New Mexico, is well known in UFO lore, but it is trees in this semi-arid part of the state that have a stronger connection to reality. Few appreciate this more than Hugh.

“The trees in downtown Roswell make this an oasis in the middle of the desert,” he says.

Unfortunately, many of the trees in Roswell are aging to the point of serious concern. Hugh, the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, and pastors from two neighboring churches in the historic district of town worried that the eventual loss of the cooling effect of trees would diminish the area's ancestral ambiance.

With the city's help, Hugh had a section of his church parking lot removed and planted the area with an arboretum of 35 pines and deciduous hardwoods. The church now stands as a visual reminder of the important role that trees play in the area and throughout this community of 48,000 people.

Roswell's urban forestry program relies on the support and technical advice of the city forester, with property owners and community members like Hugh helping to maintain and care for trees, both new and old.

“This is about preserving the heritage of a town,” he says.

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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