



Having an Impact — Worldwide 2021 Annual Report

**TREE CITY USA®
BULLETIN**

Sept/Oct 2021 • Editor: Dr. James R. Fazio



The idea for Arbor Day — the tree planting holiday — quickly spread from its origin in Nebraska to every state in America. Good ideas spread widely! The idea of tree stewardship standards in communities, and being publicly recognized when meeting those standards, was at the core of another good idea — the Tree City USA® program. Today, the concept is being embraced around the world.

Under the appropriate name of Tree Cities of the World™, this two-year-old program has now spread to 120 communities in 23 countries on every continent except Antarctica. More than 83 million citizens are benefiting from the five standards of community forestry that must be met in order for their city to be recognized as a Tree City of the World.

The new program was launched in 2019 in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. Director-General Maria Helena Semedo has said, “Urban forests and trees are a key element of sustainable urban development, but most of all, they help cities become greener, healthier and happier places to live.” When the

Children in Ealing, London, like children in other cities recognized as Tree Cities of the World, have the opportunity to learn more about why trees are important and how local citizens can help make their communities greener and healthier.

program was publicly announced at the end of its first year, Dan Lambe, president of the Arbor Day Foundation, said, “We proudly welcome all the cities that have earned a Tree City of the World designation this year. They are taking the initiative in the development and maintenance of their urban tree canopies. The benefits that trees provide to urban areas are immeasurable, and the recognized cities have invested in their communities to create a more sustainable future. We aim to celebrate and appreciate the dedication and commitment of these cities.”

The Tree City idea provides a framework for expanded tree planting and improved care of urban trees. Throughout this annual report, we highlight examples of how this is being implemented and the results that come from a good idea.



Arbor Day Foundation®

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Tree Cities of the World

During the past year, 52 cities were recognized as Tree Cities of the world. One of these — Kampala, on the east coast of Africa — is our featured city in this year's annual report.



Uganda's annual marathon draws attention to the country's need for trees.

RESPECT FOR TREES IN UGANDA

Tropical countries around the world face the daunting challenge of protecting trees from deforestation and the growth of cities. In the Republic of Uganda's capital city, Kampala, new streets, pipelines, apartments, and commercial buildings have resulted in the serious reduction of the area's once lush, green canopy. Today, this city of more than 1.65 million residents and more than 4 million who work in the city during the day and has only 11,394 street trees and 4,658 park trees, with 15% canopy cover.

Aggressive efforts are being made to change the situation. According to Kampala's urban forester, Padde Daniel, the goal is to double the canopy by 2040. Currently, about 8,000 trees are being planted annually and more than 400 receive pruning.

Importantly, public attention is being brought to bear on the need for urban trees and a stop to illegal tree cutting throughout the nation. One of the ways is an annual marathon, "Running out of Trees (ROOTS)." The starting line is in Kampala, so in cooperation with the Ministry of Water and Environment and other partners, urban forestry managers are able to use event ceremonies to highlight the needs in this city as well as the nation's forests.

Trees in Kampala's 40 neighborhoods are extremely important for shade and to mitigate the runoff from the nearly 70 inches of annual rainfall. There is a healthy diversity of tree species in the city with more than 300 species, but a recent inventory found that only 8% can be classified as large. The great majority are young and, along with newly planted trees,

will someday make major contributions to the quality of life for city residents and businesses, if they receive proper care.

Daniel sees several benefits from Kampala being recognized as a Tree City of the World. He says, "It provides me an opportunity to interact with urban forestry professionals around the world and through sharing, to learn from their vast knowledge as I embark on my own career. It also grants me an opportunity to use management and research resources such as (technical) journals. For Kampala, it provides continental and global prestige as the first city in Africa to attain this recognition, and it acts as motivation to the city authority to continue striving and better managing its urban tree cover. In addition, the (online) resource portal has been of great benefit to our staff and grounds personnel."

The portal mentioned by Daniel is the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree Cities of the World Resource Center. This website is available to all cities in the network and is designed to provide information about best practices in urban forestry; encourage better urban tree stewardship; and provide materials for publicity and public education. It is also a valuable communication avenue for member cities to share success stories and receive announcements.

Communities in any nation are invited to apply for recognition as a Tree City of the World. Membership applications are available at treecitiesoftheworld.org beginning in July of each year.

IMPACT OF RECOGNIZED TREE CITIES OF THE WORLD: (During the 2020 calendar year)



120
cities
recognized



2,372,299
trees planted



\$500,168,777
USD spent on tree care
and management



618,442
volunteer hours



Quito, Ecuador, 2 years



Turin, Italy, 2 years

COUNTRIES WITH RECOGNIZED CITIES

Argentina, 1 city	Ecuador, 2 cities	Russia, 1 city
Australia, 5 cities	India, 1 city	Slovenia, 2 cities
Belgium, 2 cities	Ireland, 1 city	Spain, 10 cities
Brazil, 3 cities	Italy, 7 cities	Sweden, 1 city
Canada, 15 cities	Mexico, 10 cities	Uganda, 1 city
Chile, 1 city	Netherlands, 1 city	United Kingdom, 11 cities
Colombia, 2 cities	New Zealand, 3 cities	United States, 38 cities
Costa Rica, 1 city	Peru, 1 city	

Race contestants, volunteers, and community members in Kampala plant a tree following the annual marathon.



THE FIVE STANDARDS

- 1. RESPONSIBILITY.** A written statement by city leaders delegating responsibility for tree care.
- 2. RULES.** A law or official policy that governs the management of forests and trees.
- 3. ASSESSMENT.** Knowing what trees and forests are present through an inventory or assessment will enable long-term planning for tree planting, care, and removals.
- 4. ALLOCATION.** A dedicated annual budget for implementing a tree management plan.
- 5. CELEBRATION.** An annual celebration of trees to raise awareness and acknowledge contributing staff and volunteers.



Tree City USA in Action

The Tree City USA program was established in 1976 to help commemorate our nation's 200th anniversary. From the initial 42 communities, recognition can now be extended to 3,676 cities, urbanized counties, and military bases. All meet the program's four standards and all contribute in many ways to the improved living environment for residents and businesses.



TREE CITY USA®

Norwalk is a city of 89,000 located in southeastern Connecticut near the mouth of Long Island Sound. It has been a Tree City USA for 16 years and is having a positive impact on the city's built environment. A good example has been the greening of 50 Washington Plaza.

The site of this project is in the heart of the city's downtown area. Unfortunately, it was mostly impervious concrete surface with no tree canopy. In fact, Norwalk has been ranked in the bottom 10 of the state's cities for impervious surface cover. In a successful grant application, Erica Kipp, a member of the Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee, wrote about flooding in the square and warned that, with climate change, the situation was likely to get worse. "You could see stormwater rushing across the plaza during heavy rains," she says. In her grant application, she explained "50 Washington Plaza is a series of buildings and concrete pavement that is impervious to stormwater. Therefore, the amount of stormwater that this urban landscape can retain, or infiltrate, is nonexistent. Water flow to nearby areas is high and contributes to flooding and runoff, pollution, and ecological degradation of Long Island Sound and Norwalk River." A grant from America the Beautiful is now helping to change that situation.

The City of Norwalk, a partner in the project, removed concrete and added grass to the plaza. Thanks to the action of Erica's committee and another partner, Keep Norwalk Beautiful, grant funding was received and made it possible to double the number of trees the city had budgeted for the project. As a result, was 44 large-caliper trees were planted. The 4.5-inch caliper trees were too large to be safely handled by volunteers, but students from Norwalk Community College and others were on hand to help prepare the planting holes and receive an educational briefing on the importance of trees and green spaces.



A landscape architect's rendering of Norwalk's 50 Washington Plaza after renovation.

THE FOUR STANDARDS — AND WHY

1. **A TREE BOARD** or department to ensure that there are people charged with the responsibility for community trees.
2. **A TREE CARE ORDINANCE.** This provides the necessary authority and can be used to communicate with residents about the needs and benefits of trees. The document can be long or short and written based on the needs and desires of the specific community.
3. **AN ANNUAL BUDGET** to reflect commitment to the program. To enable communities of any size to participate, the minimum amount is set at \$2 per capita rather than a specific amount.
4. **ARBOR DAY OBSERVATION.** A proclamation by the mayor or other official and an observance is a sure way to focus the attention of local leaders and residents of all ages on community trees and the need for planting and care.

Tree Campus® Higher Education

This program is now in its 13th year and 391 institutions of higher education benefit from being recognized for meeting Tree Campus Higher Education standards -- including Norwalk Community College.



Education and service were combined as students at Norwalk Community College participated in the city's project to green 50 Washington Plaza. They also learned firsthand about the ecoservices provided by trees.

The Tree Campus Higher Education program provides multiple challenges and opportunities. It helps colleges and universities establish and sustain healthy trees through planning and systematic, continuous stewardship. At the same time, it actively involves students in planting and caring for trees, learning leadership skills, and having opportunities for hands-on engagement in service projects.

THE STANDARDS FOR THIS AWARD

1. A campus tree advisory committee
2. A campus tree care plan
3. Dedicated annual expenditures based on the plan
4. An Arbor Day observance
5. A service learning project conducted by students

Erica Kipp is not only chair of the Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee, she is also a professor of environmental science and was instrumental in helping Norwalk Community College (NCC) become the state's first community college to receive recognition as a Tree Campus Higher Education. She says of the program, "I think it's important that students are vested in the community they are a part of. It's equally important for residents to see students involved in activities that make Norwalk a better place to live, work, and learn in."

At NCC, the students have not only been involved in creating an outstanding management plan that protects campus trees, they have helped plant trees in an effort to eventually increase canopy cover from 32% to 61%. Through publicity in the school newspaper, campus events, and

social media, the students and other members of the advisory committee are sharing their enthusiasm for trees throughout the community and explaining the benefits of trees to thousands of students — the leaders of tomorrow.

DID YOU KNOW?

The coronavirus pandemic put a lot of people out of work, pushed others out of their offices and into their homes, and canceled uncountable events. Despite the inconveniences and the tragic loss of lives and health, community tree stewardship was not forgotten. There is hope and a refreshing outlook as we report the following statistics.

NUMBER OF:

Tree City USA communities.....	3,676
New Tree City USA communities	70
Growth Award recipients	376
People living in Tree City USA communities ..	163,214,903
Tree Line USA utilities.....	146
Tree Campus Higher Education institutions.....	391
Tree Campus Healthcare facilities	24
Tree Cities of the World.....	120

More Outstanding Programs

Healthcare facilities came into the national spotlight more than ever during the coronavirus pandemic. Their workers have rightfully been acknowledged as the heroes they are. And aside from saving lives and bravely caring for infected patients, many still found time to care for their green surroundings.



Cleveland Clinic employees, community members, and Fairfax Renaissance Development Corporation employees work together to clean up a wooded lot, prune trees, and plant others.

Scientific evidence continues to mount that shows a link between trees (and other vegetation) and mental and physical health. These little bits of country in the city, as pioneer landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted pointed out, are vital to healthier lives. It was for these reasons that Tree Campus Healthcare was initiated two years ago. This program encourages the planting and care of trees around hospitals and other inpatient facilities. After its second year, 24 facilities were given Tree Campus Healthcare recognition, a promising increase of 8%.

Partners like The Davey Tree Expert Company have been instrumental in promoting and participating in this new program. For example, at Ohio's Cleveland Clinic, the program's community project standard was met by clinic staff and Fairfax Renaissance Development employees working under guidance from Davey experts to clean up a nearby wooded lot, prune trees, and plant others, all the while complying with CDC guidelines on social distancing.

At the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, Davey also provided application process assistance and on-the-ground help. Davey staff helped the Center create a tree care plan and joined members of the medical staff, students, and other volunteers in a project to improve the Harry Hines median strip that runs through the center of the medical campus. Trees were pruned to remove suckers, cross branches, and broken limbs. Elsewhere, 20 lacebark elms were planted next to a new substation. Receiving Tree Campus Healthcare recognition, according to Kyle Dykes, manager of campus services, has resulted in "a lot of positive feedback and was a boost to morale."

THE FIVE STANDARDS

1. **AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE** with representation from such stakeholders as healthcare providers, grounds personnel, patient advocates, and community forestry officials.
2. **A TREE CARE PLAN** that nurtures and protects campus trees and identifies opportunities for strategically adding new trees. For facilities with little or no space for trees on the property, an option is to adopt street or other public trees adjacent to the facility.
3. **COLLABORATION WITH THE COMMUNITY** as evidenced by leading a community forestry practice at least once during the year, such as tree planting, monitoring, or other activities that engage community residents in the project.
4. **CELEBRATE & EDUCATE** by sponsoring an event such as Arbor Day or a campaign to highlight the connection between trees, nature, and human health.
5. **FINANCIAL COMMITMENT** toward the implementation of the above by annually investing at least \$2 per full-time-equivalent employee in cash or in-kind contributions.

Growth Award is Upgraded

Few changes have been made to the Tree City USA Growth award since its inception in 1991. Last year, the program was expanded to provide more opportunities and to make its administration easier. Here is a summary of the changes.

BACKGROUND

The Growth Award is a hallmark of communities that want to improve local stewardship of the urban forest. It reflects motivation and faithfulness deserving of special recognition. This year, 376 communities of all sizes have the honor of adding Growth Award to their signs and other award materials.

In response to the increasing sophistication of urban forestry and input from field personnel, a committee of Arbor Day Foundation staff and practicing professionals was formed to create new award criteria and an improved application process. At the same time, the purpose of this award was retained and enhanced — to encourage Tree City USA communities of all sizes to go beyond the four basic award standards and grow their urban forestry programs to new heights of service.

THE NEW CRITERIA

The new program still applies only to communities that have been Tree Cities for at least a year, and still requires 10 points from a list of activities to be earned in a single year. A major change is that some activities are limited to one-time use only. For example, adopting a new tree planting program such as NeighborWoods is valued at 8 points, but can be used only once toward the award. Other activities, such as monitoring survival of newly installed trees, are 4 points and can be used annually. The expanded criteria also better align better with federal reporting metrics and are more effectively linked to state action plan priorities.

The criteria are now arranged in five categories with the following activity subgroups:

1. **BUILDING THE TEAM:** Budgets, staff, and training
2. **MEASURING TREES AND FORESTS:** Tree canopy, tree inventory, and urban forests
3. **PLANNING THE WORK:** Policies and plans
4. **PERFORMING THE WORK:** Planting trees, maintaining trees, tree risk management, recycling & reuse, protecting trees, and natural areas
5. **THE COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK:** Collaboration, volunteers, outreach, awareness, and education

THE STERLING COMMUNITY AWARD

Communities that have earned the Tree City USA Growth Award for 10 years in a row qualify for the Sterling Community Award. This year ten communities have this highest distinction of motivation, growth, and faithful dedication to planting and caring for community trees.



This Year's STERLING COMMUNITY AWARD WINNERS:

Prescott Valley, Arizona

Meridian, Idaho

Grosse Pointe, Michigan

Eden Prairie, Minnesota

Aurora, Ohio

Glendale, Ohio

Hamilton, Ohio

Sandusky, Ohio

Shaker Heights, Ohio

Grants Pass, Oregon



Energy-Saving Trees — 10th Anniversary



Trees have been planted for shade since colonial times. They have always added summer comfort and aesthetic value to a home site. Only in recent decades have trees been recognized for the benefits they can provide in terms of reducing energy consumption, thereby saving on household energy bills, reducing the need for more and expensive power generating plants, contributing to less air pollution, and even helping to counter climate change.

Ten years ago, private and municipal utilities joined with the Arbor Day Foundation to create a program that encourages the planting of shade trees — correctly placed and installed — and no cost to customers. This is the Energy-Saving Trees program. Also known as the Community Canopy program, the second brand expanded our partnerships to cities, companies and nonprofit organizations. In all cases, the purpose is to provide trees at at little or no cost that will be planted around homes where shade can provide energy reduction. This sometimes means a reduction of as much as 20% and added together, the amount of savings within a community is significant.

To date, the Energy-Savings Trees program alone has been responsible for the distribution of 412,838 yard trees to 278,650 households nationwide, with an estimated impact of 619.9 million kilowatt hours saved (equivalent to 56,000

homes off the grid for a year) and 1.6 billion pounds (800,000 tons) of carbon sequestered (equivalent to 170,000 cars off the road for a year).

The homeowner process for enrollment is completed through an interactive, educational online tool which is setup for each individual partner/project. Trees are then fulfilled through either mail or event distribution.

Homeowners are invited to visit arborday.org/est to see if a program is available in your area. Start by providing your address and either a current project will open or you will be able to submit a request for your local utility to participate. Within active projects, you will see an aerial view of your property, then select the species in which you are interested before moving the tree to potential planting locations surrounding your home. Within the process, the annual amount of energy saved by that tree will appear dependent on planting location. Directions will be provided on how to order and when/how to expect delivery.



Another important partnership with some 146 utilities across the nation is the Tree Line USA program.

This distinction is an award to private and public utilities that meet guidelines for community tree care both above and below ground, as well as for involvement locally in tree planting and Arbor Day celebrations. Specifically, standards include quality tree care, annual worker training, tree planting and public education, a tree-based energy conservation program, and sponsorship or participation in Arbor Day events. Utilities that meet the standards are listed at arborday.org/treelinedirectory and may display the Tree Line USA logo on their trucks and hard hats as well as receive well-deserved publicity.

This remarkable, interactive online tool was developed by The Davey Institute, a division of Davey Tree Expert Company, based on scientific research and i-Tree software. It can be used to select the right trees to be planted to maximize energy savings and other environmental benefits as well as to apply for free trees courtesy of participating utilities.



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