

Urban and Community Forestry

Urban and Community Forestry addresses the stewardship of urban natural resources where 77 percent of Pennsylvanians live. Important connections exist between the quality of life in metropolitan areas and land consumption associated with sprawl. In addition there is a strong economic case for conservation of green open space to guide growth and revitalize city centers and older suburbs. The term “urban forestry” was coined in 1965 to define a specialized branch of forestry that deals with the cultivation and management of trees in the entire area influenced by the urban population. (Compared to “arboriculture” which focuses on the care of individual trees.)

Urban and community forestry in the Commonwealth is guided by the Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Council. The Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Council is a nonprofit organization made up of all kinds of people who want to improve our community forests and green spaces. The Council guides a statewide program that provides technical and financial assistance for communities and volunteer groups.

People are becoming more aware of how important plants, trees, and green spaces are to their quality of life. By protecting against the harshness of your environment, greenery can significantly contribute to a healthier and a more wholesome community. Trees clean the air, reduce the urban heat island effect, reduce energy costs, conserve soil, and beautify neighborhoods. They make shopping districts more inviting, enhance residential and commercial property values, and reflect the pride we take in our communities.

Support for the Pennsylvania Urban & Community Forestry program comes from many partners including the DCNR Bureau of Forestry and USDA Forest Service-Northeast Area-State & Private Forestry, and Penn State University.