

Urban and Community Forestry Program

2016 Accomplishment Report – Michigan

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Introduction

Michigan is the Great Lakes State and home to nearly 10 million people. It is also home to one of the Nation’s largest State forest systems and three national forests, and is surrounded by the largest freshwater lake system in the world. Equally important are the State’s 1,300 plus communities where nearly 80 percent of the State’s citizens live, work, and play. The trees and forests in and around these communities provide important ecological, economic, and social benefits. They must be managed to ensure long-term sustainability, health, and resilience for current and future generations.

Michigan’s Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) program is administered by one full-time equivalent employee working to promote management of urban forest resources through technical, educational, and financial assistance. During FY 2016 this assistance, made possible through the U.S. Forest Service, reached nearly 5.3 million people living in participating communities throughout the State.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) UCF program provides this critical assistance at the local level through grants and agreements with communities, community-based organizations, and others. Outcomes are focused on building awareness and local capacity to manage urban forests and ensure their health and sustainability while enhancing the vibrancy and livability of communities.

Key Accomplishments

Green Macomb Urban Forest Partnership

Location(s): Centerline, Clinton Township, Eastpointe, Fraser, Harrison Township, Mt. Clemens, Roseville, Shelby Township, St. Clair Shores, Sterling Heights, Warren

Macomb County, in southeast Michigan, ranks as one of the most highly populated and urbanized areas of the State. It is also significantly deficient in urban tree canopy cover throughout much of the county. The Macomb County Planning & Economic Development Department developed and led this initiative to support green infrastructure efforts that strengthen the economic vitality, quality of life, and environmental well-being of people in the county.

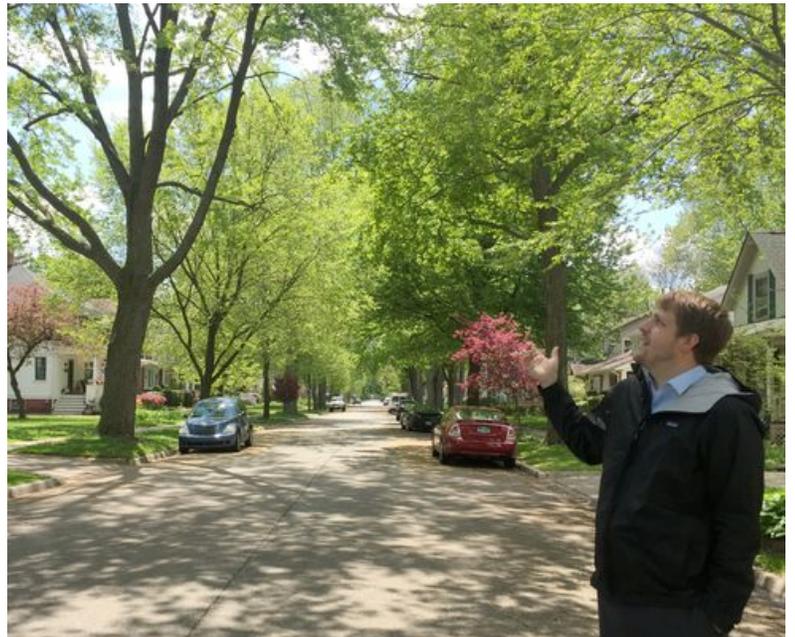
The Green Macomb Urban Forest Partnership was proposed as a means to kick start the county’s *Green Macomb* program and start implementing recommendations from the regional [Green Infrastructure Vision for Southeast Michigan plan](#) developed by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments in 2014.

During the course of the project, U.S. Forest Service funding was granted to the county via the State's Urban and Community Forestry program and helped facilitate the following project goals:

- Equip community managers with the tools and resources to make informed decisions that will effectively increase urban forestry composition and tree benefits.
- Encourage tree planting that maintains and grows regional tree canopy while also improving species diversity and urban forest resilience.
- Promote sustainable urban forestry programs.
- Connect partners to diverse funding sources and create low-cost options for urban forestry initiatives.
- Provide regional tree planting and management solutions and local program support.
- Engage citizens in urban forestry efforts; establish ways for people to contribute time, resources, money, and private tree planting.

Some specific outcomes included these:

- Engaged 11 communities and multiple partners to establish the foundation for supporting long-term countywide planning for urban forestry.
- Hosted four outreach and strategy meetings with local governments and partners.
- Completed a needs assessments of local government tree ordinances, urban forestry programs, existing data, and resources, including community-specific tree canopy maps.
- Created the [Green Macomb Urban Forest Partnership Web site](#)
- Created the Urban Tree Resource Analysis and Cost Estimator tool.
- Created the Green Macomb Urban Forestry Roadmap using results of community needs assessments and meetings.
- Developed community-specific tree planting guidance documents (including priority planting maps) and scheduled demonstration tree planting for fall 2016.



Brent Geurink, Associate Planner with the Macomb County Department of Planning & Economic Development, talks about the tree canopy on Lodewyck Street in Mt. Clemens on May 13, 2016. (Photo: Christina Hall, Detroit Free Press)

This initial Green Macomb Urban Forest Partnership effort has laid the groundwork for positive change in Macomb County's urban tree canopy. The combination of county support, engaged communities, active partners, and a clear vision for future action will drive momentum and create new opportunities to positively impact the region through better management of its green infrastructure.

Statistical Highlights

Managing Communities:	76
Developing Communities:	216
Population of Participating Communities:	5,328,507
Volunteer Assistance Generated (hours):	13,155

