

Tree City USA®

Creating greener communities nationwide



TREE CITY USA®
An Arbor Day Foundation Program

Cooler temperatures. Cleaner air. Healthier residents.

The benefits trees bring to urban environments are endless — and by meeting the four Tree City USA standards, your community can experience them firsthand.



PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Tree City USA program was founded in 1976 to celebrate towns and cities committed to growing their urban canopy. Led by the Arbor Day Foundation, with partners at USDA Forest Service and National Association of State Foresters, it provides the foundational framework necessary for communities to manage and expand their tree cover.

Program applications are completely free. Many cities renew their Tree City USA status every year, making them eligible for a Growth Award and other urban forestry opportunities.

THE FOUNDATION OF URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The Tree City USA program has helped more than 3,600 communities across the country build out their urban forests. Recognition forms the base layer for five different areas of growth, including expansion of personnel, financial investment, defined policies and plans, and engagement with residents.



STANDARDS FOR RECOGNITION

To receive recognition, a community must meet four core standards for its public trees:

✓ Standard 1: Form A Tree Board Or Department

Delegating responsibility for city- or town-owned trees is the first official step to becoming a Tree City. By forming a tree board or department, cities can create a more organized and effective urban forestry plan.

✓ Standard 2: Establish A Tree Care Ordinance

A public tree care ordinance assigns clear authority over public trees and provides clear guidance for planting, maintaining, and/or removing trees from streets, parks, and other public spaces.

✓ Standard 3: Maintain A Community Forestry Program With An Annual Budget Of At Least \$2 Per Capita

Your community most likely already spends at least \$2 per capita on the planting, care, and removal of trees. This is intended to demonstrate an ongoing investment into your public trees.

✓ Standard 4: Proclaim and Observe Arbor Day

Celebrating Arbor Day and passing an official holiday proclamation helps create pride for your city's entire urban forestry program.



BENEFITS OF RECOGNITION

By becoming a Tree City, your community will:

- Receive flags, signs, and other materials to proudly display your award
- Educate residents about the value of trees and green space
- Gain national recognition for your commitment to environmental stewardship
- Create a cleaner, healthier, and more beautiful urban landscape

GETTING STARTED

Interested in joining, but not quite sure where to begin? It's as simple as following these five steps!

1. Make the case to friends and leaders in your community
2. Contact your state's urban and community forestry coordinator
3. Work together to fulfill the four Tree City USA standards
4. Celebrate Arbor Day
5. Submit your free application!



Learn and apply today at arborday.org/treecityusa

