



City halfway to goal of planting 10,000 trees to improve health equity: 5,000 trees still available to residents

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DETROIT - The City of Detroit's General Services Department has committed to planting 10,000 trees to enhance neighborhoods and promote safer and healthier communities. We are more than halfway to our goal and have planted a whopping 5,500 trees since the program began in 2017.

Detroiters can take part in this program by requesting free tree planting at their homes on the berm between the sidewalk and the street by visiting detroitmi.gov/treeservices. Since there is only a limited window for successful planting, your tree request may be fulfilled either this spring or fall.

Trees are not only a beautiful addition to any neighborhood, but they also provide many other benefits, such as improving air quality, helping keep neighborhoods cool, reducing the impact of climate change, and even diverting stormwater to help prevent flooding. They can also drive down utility bills and raise property values.

"The City of Detroit is committed to making sure that our neighborhoods look and feel like neighborhoods should, said Brad Dick, group executive, Services & Infrastructure. "Trees do so much and help to increase the sustainability of our city by reducing heat island effect and more."

In the City of Detroit, many homes do not have air conditioning, and over a third of Detroiters rely on walking or public transit to get around town. Studies have shown mature trees can reduce temperatures by 10-20 degrees. 14% of Detroiters suffer from Asthma, and trees can help by reducing air pollutants that can cause or trigger asthma. Trees have also been found to reduce stress, blood pressure, and even tension. We are actively working to reduce urban "heat islands" and help promote healthier neighborhoods by strategically planting trees in areas we have found to have the greatest need.

The City of Detroit's General Services department, in coordination with our Planning and Development Department, has partnered with UM and WSU to develop a map of climate vulnerability throughout the city. The city and our planting partners are utilizing these tools to focus our tree planting efforts in those areas that will have the most to gain from the benefits of tree planting, whether they be reducing high heat in the summer, reducing flooding impacts, or just improving the livability and quality of life in their neighborhoods.

"Our goal in planting trees is to make sure that residents are engaged throughout the process, we want to use this as an opportunity to educate people about how important trees are for the community, said Angel Squalls, Associate Forester, General Services Department. "Trees are not only beautiful but they provide so many benefits for the environment."

By doing this, we will improve Detroit's tree equity and ensure that all residents can enjoy the positive benefits of trees. "The poem Trees by Joyce Kilmer so aptly capture how I feel about

nature's splendor. Trees harbor life and they beautify and protect the environment. I applaud the administration's ambitious goal to plant 10,000 trees in our city," said Latisha Johnson, Council Member for District 4. "I encourage District 4 residents to take advantage of this fantastic opportunity to beautify our neighborhoods, improve air quality and climate resiliency, cool neighborhoods, reduce utility bills, and improve home values."

Additionally, the 10K Up! program is providing opportunities for Detroit businesses and their employees. All four of the contractors hired by the City of Detroit to work on the 10K Up tree planting initiative are Detroit-based, including Black-owned JE Jordan Landscaping. Erica Jordan, Vice President of JE Jordan says, "The contracts we have with the City of Detroit have allowed us to grow our company tenfold. The project managers we work with continuously set us up for success. Working with the city has been an awesome opportunity." JE Jordan has been planting trees with the city since the program began and says, "We take an enormous amount of pride in planting these trees. The residents are always so happy to see us and pleased with the finished product. We know we are making a difference in their lives."