

# URBAN FORESTRY PARTNERSHIP STERLING HEIGHTS



## STERLING HEIGHTS COMMUNITY FORESTRY GOALS

1

**MAINTAIN AND INCREASE TREE CANOPY**

2

**CONTINUE TRANSITION TO PROACTIVE PROGRAMMING**

3

**REPLACE ALL TREES THAT ARE REMOVED**

4

**PROMOTE CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT**

### STRENGTHS

**EXPERIENCE:** Staff have over 5 years of experience in tree management.

**POLICY COMMITMENT:** Robust policies in place such as tree ordinance, tree care standards, tree preservation requirements, and planting requirements for new development.

**DATA AVAILABLE:** Street tree inventory is available to guide management efforts.

**FUNDING AVAILABLE:** Program funded

### CHALLENGES

**STAFF CAPACITY AND EXPERTISE:** Single staff member responsible for trees may benefit from technical training and dedicated time for tree management.

**INSUFFICIENT FUNDING:** Tree planting activities are not a primary budget priority.

**IMPROVE GUIDING DOCUMENTS:** Currently, only safety procedures and training plans guide forestry program. No comprehensive urban forestry management plan, resiliency plan, or emergency response in place. No

### OPPORTUNITIES

**EDUCATION:** Pursue technical training for staff; promote ISA-Certified Arborist credentials.

**POLICY UPDATE:** Review existing policies to evaluate effectiveness and consider updates or revisions. Leverage the city's strong urban forestry commitment to support a sustainable program and increased tree planting.

**INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF RESOURCE:** Inventory park trees and utilize urban tree canopy analysis provided by the

through general fund allocation.

**TREES ARE A PRIORITY:** Elected officials, administrators, and program staff prioritize trees and set high expectations for urban forestry program. Leadership supports setting new goals and further committing to urban forestry.

**STRATEGIC PLANTING:** New tree plantings consider aesthetic values, species diversity, and maximizing benefits.

urban forestry master plan connects, directs, and prioritizes current actions.

**PUBLIC PERCEPTION:** Residents may not prioritize trees or understand urban forestry benefits.

**MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES:** Hazard trees and public safety are the highest priority and may minimize opportunity and funding for tree planting or routine tree care.

Green Macomb Urban Forestry Partnership and County/SEMCOG.

**PLANNING:** Develop formal guiding documents; especially urban forestry management plan.

**ENGAGE PUBLIC:** Consider campaign to highlight urban forest needs and benefits; focus on economic benefits; engage the public to foster citizen advocates, as well as private tree planting. Consider volunteer planting projects.

### CURRENT CANOPY COVER: 19%

Tree City USA: YES  
Tree Ordinance: YES  
Current Tree Inventory: YES

Tree Planting: <15% of Program Budget (General Fund)

Tree Donation Program: NO  
Active Management: YES  
Active Volunteers: NO

Tree Work: COMBINATION  
Tree Planting: COMBINATION

Public Streets: 504 Miles  
Public Parks: 909 Acres

Community Contacts:  
Michael Moore, Public Works Director  
mmoore@sterling-heights.net

### NEEDS

Additional Funding	Management Plan
Community Support	Master Plan
Technical Training	Citizen Advocacy
Park Tree Inventory	Outreach and Education



POWERED



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## CODE AND ORDINANCE OVERVIEW

This document provides a quick reference for how community forestry is incorporated into the local regulatory framework. It can serve as initial guidance for future updates and potential action. The matrix below gives an overview of the forestry and landscape standards included in local ordinances, based on those elements typically included in robust programs. While this overview determines whether an element is included and the

corresponding location within local legislation, it does not provide an in depth review of the quality of each element nor how well it is actually functioning in practice. A more detailed matrix is kept with the Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development and can be made available upon request to support local updates. For more information on Green Macomb and your community, please visit: [green.macombgov.org](http://green.macombgov.org).

ORDINANCE/CODE ELEMENT	YES	NO	LOCATION
Tree Ordinance	●		Ch 51
Responsible Party: Public Tree Planting	●		Ch 51-Sec 3,5
Responsible Party: Public Tree Maintenance	●		Ch 51-Sec 3,5
Responsible Party: Public Tree Removal	●		Ch 51-Sec 3,5
Tree Board/Commission/Department and Duties	●		Ch 16-Sec 6
Tree Canopy Guidelines		●	
Dead/Diseased Tree Removal	●		Ch 16-Sec 6, Ch 51-Sec 16
Public: Tree Planting	●		Ch 51-Sec 6, Zoning-24.03
Public: Tree Preservation	●		Ch 51-Sec 37,46, Ch 53-Sec 13,14
Public: Tree Removal/Maintenance	●		Ch 48-Sec 8, Ch 51-Sec 6,8,12,44
Public: Permit required for work on trees	●		Ch 51-Sec 8,10,39-43
Public: Restricts mutilation of trees	●		Ch 44-Sec 2, Ch 51-Sec 11
Development: Tree Planting	●		Ch 51-Sec 15, Zoning-22.01,22.02
Development: Tree Preservation	●		Ch 51-Sec 37,39,46, Zoning-22.01,22.02, 26.01
Development: Tree Removal	●		Ch 51-Sec 39-43, Zoning-26.02
Development: Tree Replacement	●		Ch 51-Sec 44
Development: Requires landscape plan, inclusion of trees and vegetation in site plans	●		Zoning- 24.02,24.03,26.01,26.02
Parking: Tree Planting	●		Zoning-24.03
Parks: Tree Preservation	●		Ch 51-Sec 37, Ch 38-Sec 8
Woodlands: Tree Preservation	●		Ch 51-Sec 43,46,47, Zoning-22.01,22.02
Businesses, Community Centers, Pools, etc: Tree and landscaping requirements	●		Zoning-14.06
Greenbelts, Berms, Planting Screens, Fences, etc: Tree Requirements	●		Zoning-22.01,24.01
Greenbelts, Berms, Planting Screens, Fences, etc: Landscaping Standards	●		Ch 17-Sec 51, Zoning- 24.01,24.02,24.03
Approved/Suggested Species List	●		Ch 51-Sec 8,44(E7), City Website
Prohibited Species List	●		Ch 51-Sec 7, Zoning-24.02(D), City Website
Plant Material Guidelines: Species, Size, Spacing	●		Ch 51-Sec 6, Zoning-Article 24

### SPECIFICATIONS & STANDARDS MANUAL

A Specifications and Standards Manual can be created to organize all relevant information used to guide tree management into a single document. It houses information regarding species, sizing, spacing, planting, removal, replacement and maintenance requirements. Ideally, the manual would be referenced in the ordinance, but would be kept separate. Maintaining the document outside the ordinance allows for easy changes and in depth explanations. Like any city plan, the Specifications and Standards Manual should be revisited every few years to make updates.

### SPECIES LISTS

It is best to maintain species lists outside the code of ordinances to more easily respond to changing environmental conditions and new diseases, which may effect urban canopy. This revision can be implemented during the next round of ordinance updates.

### RESOURCES

*Guidance for creating and updating tree ordinances:*  
[www.releafmichigan.org](http://www.releafmichigan.org)  
[www.isa-arbor.com/education/onlineResources/treeOrdinanceGuidelines.aspx](http://www.isa-arbor.com/education/onlineResources/treeOrdinanceGuidelines.aspx)  
[www.gfc.state.ga.us/community-forests/planning-policy/tree-ordinances/](http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/community-forests/planning-policy/tree-ordinances/)

Information based on City of Sterling Heights' Code of Ordinances from Amlegal.com. Updated August, 2016. 'Ch'=Chapter, 'Sec'=Section(s).

