Reforesting Cleveland

Cleveland has a long and rocky history with trees. It was referred to as “The Forest City” as far back as the 1820s, when Cleveland Village Council President Leonard Case, Sr. established an ordinance providing for the planting of shade trees. By the end of the 19th century, the city of Cleveland had great tree cover.

The city has lost significant foliage. The current tree canopy in Cleveland is 18.9 percent, the fourth-smallest in Cuyahoga County, according to a study funded by the U.S. Forest Service. The study shows Cleveland’s canopy lags behind the suburbs; the county’s canopy is 37.6 percent. Cleveland now has so few trees that the city’s boundaries are visible on Google Earth.

Working with our partners, we intend to plant thousands of trees in Cleveland’s neighborhoods and bring back “The Forest City.”

Our mission

From the countryside to the city, we provide our region with natural places that nourish and support vibrant and prosperous communities by identifying, preserving, restoring and maintaining essential assets like clean water, working farms, wildlife areas and parks.

Contact us

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Reforest Our City
Why plant trees?

Trees are vital to the health of our cities. They save energy, reduce stormwater runoff, enhance property values, improve water quality and make our neighborhoods more attractive.

But in many urban and suburban communities, tree canopies are dwindling. Some trees are lost to development. Others are never planted or not replaced due to municipal budget constraints.

Western Reserve Land Conservancy launched Reforest Our City to reverse the trend. We are working with our partners — including residents — to plant and maintain thousands of trees along streets, in parks and in other public spaces.

The time is now. The need has never been greater.

Our work

Expertise
The Land Conservancy staff includes an urban forester based at our Thriving Communities Institute office in Cleveland. The certified arborist offers expert assistance to cities, community organizations and neighborhood groups.

Partnerships
We manage and support all work but partner with numerous organizations. We are developing a grant program that would fund local partners such as Community Development Corporations and block clubs.

Citizen training
Tree Steward training is available for citizens to learn proper tree care and maintenance. Training residents to maintain existing and newly planted trees is critical to the success of our program. We also aim to increase public awareness of the importance of trees through events and programs.

Tree planting events
Put on your work gloves – we are going to be planting a lot of trees. In addition to organizing educational workshops, we will hold a series of tree planting events involving hundreds of volunteers and residents.

Tree inventories
We strategically plant trees based on existing knowledge and tree inventories, which we conduct using our Geographic Information Systems and planning expertise.

Get involved
Join us! Keep up with Reforest Our City by visiting www.wrlandconservancy.org or following us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. You can also contact us directly at (216) 515-8300 or volunteer@wrlandconservancy.org.