

Benefits of Trees in Your Community

Trees improve air quality. The leaves can collect and absorb particles of airborne pollutants, such as sulfur dioxide, and they also store carbon absorbed from the carbon dioxide in the air. The physical presence of trees can reduce wind speed, which allows heavy particles of air pollutants to settle to the ground.

Trees contribute to improved water quality by decreasing soil erosion and reducing storm water runoff that may affect the sanitary sewer system. Trees can minimize runoff and help developers comply with storm water requirements without relying so heavily on expensive retention facilities and sediment traps. They prevent soil erosion and reduce water pollution by holding soil in place and preventing the transport of sediments and chemicals into streams.

Trees increase property values for both residential and business locations. Because trees increase property values, the result is an increase in the tax base for the community. In a recent National Association of Home Builders survey, builders reported that 43% of home buyers would pay up to \$3000 more for wooded lots and 30% would pay up to \$5000 more. A Bank America Mortgage survey of real estate agents showed that 84% believe a home with trees would be as much as 20% more saleable.

The National Arbor Day Foundation reports that people linger and shop longer along tree-lined streets. Apartments and offices rent more quickly and tenants stay longer in wooded areas. Studies conducted by the USDA have shown that healthy, mature trees add an average of 10% to a property's value.

Crime levels in communities are reduced when there are extensive street tree systems and well-landscaped parks.

Trees act as noise buffers against roadways by absorbing unpleasant sounds from the urban environment.

The Institute of Transport Studies at England's University of Leeds has found that street tree plantings have a traffic calming effect. Tree lined streets act as psycho-perceptive measures, which subtly slows traffic and encourages lower traffic speeds by making roadways appear narrower. Landscaping along streets provides a separation between motorists and pedestrians and reduces the visual width of the roadway.