

More Trees Needed in Frederick, Md., Study Finds

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*"With 12 percent tree canopy, Frederick has less urban
forest cover than several other cities in the region"*

February 2008 -- Frederick, Maryland's urban tree canopy covers just 12 percent of the city, but an additional 72 percent could possibly be covered by trees in the future, according to a recent study by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the University of Vermont and the U.S. Forest Service.

Urban tree canopy—the layer of trees covering the ground when viewed from above—is a good indicator of the amount and quality of forests in cities, suburbs and towns. Healthy trees in these urban and suburban areas help improve water quality in local waterways—and eventually the Bay—by reducing polluted runoff. Urban forests also provide wildlife habitat, absorb carbon dioxide from the air and enhance quality of life for residents.

With 12 percent tree canopy, Frederick has less urban forest cover than several other cities in the region, including Annapolis (41 percent urban tree canopy), Washington, D.C. (35 percent) and Baltimore (20 percent). The report finds that 9,500 acres in Frederick, or 72 percent of the city's land area, could possibly support tree canopy because it is not covered by a road or structure (such as a building).

In particular, 81 percent of the institutional land area in Frederick could support urban tree canopy; currently, only 8 percent of these lands is covered.

Residential lands are also important, accounting for 34 percent of the city's overall possible urban tree canopy. Education, outreach and incentives for residents to plant trees may help improve Frederick's urban tree canopy cover.

Thirty-eight urban and suburban Maryland communities, including Annapolis, Baltimore, Bowie, Cumberland, Greenbelt, Hyattsville, Rockville and 29 communities in Baltimore County, are involved in setting tree canopy cover goals. Washington, D.C., and communities in Virginia and Pennsylvania have also set urban tree canopy goals.

Under the 2007 Forest Conservation Initiative, the Bay Program committed to accelerating reforestation and conservation in urban and suburban areas by increasing the number of communities with tree canopy expansion goals to 120 by 2020.

Visit DNR's website at:

http://www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/programs/urban/UTC_Report_Frederick.pdf

to read the full "A Report on the City of Frederick's Existing and Possible Urban Tree Canopy" report prepared by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, University of Vermont's Spatial Analysis Laboratory, and the USDA Forest Service's Northern Research Station.