Operations & Environment Committee

Mary Merrill Minneapolis
Park and Recreation Board
Headquarters - Board Room
Minneapolis, MN 55411
www.minneapolisparks.org

Committee Meeting

~ Agenda ~

Wednesday, July 15, 2026 - 5:40 PM

Meeting Times are subject to change based on discussion from previous meetings.

Chair
Chair Kedar Deshpande
Vice Chair
Vice Chair Jason Garcia
Commissioners
Commissioner District 6 Cathy Abene
Commissioner At Large Meg Forney
Commissioner District 2 Charles Rucker

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

II.1.
APPROVAL OF AGENDA

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

III.2. **D 2026-52**
OPERATIONS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES OF APRIL 29, 2026

IV. ACTION ITEMS

IV.3. **Resolution 2026-121**
RESOLUTION APPROVING A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA FOR TREE RESEARCH AND OUTREACH LASTING FIVE YEARS STARTING IN 2026

V. STUDY/REPORT ITEM

V.4. **D 2026-80**

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING INITIATIVES STUDY ITEM

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Operations & Environment Committee

Mary Merrill Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Headquarters - Board Room
Minneapolis, MN 55411
www.minneapolisparks.org

Committee Meeting

~ Minutes ~

Wednesday, April 29, 2026 - 8:11 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

II.1. Approval of Agenda

VOTING

Motion by: Garcia, Jason
Second by:

COMMISSIONERS	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT	RECUSE
Abene, Cathy	X				
Rucker, Charles	X				
Deshpande, Kedar	X				
Garcia, Jason	X				
Forney, Meg	X				

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

IV. ACTION ITEMS

V. STUDY/REPORT ITEM

V.1. DISCUSSION ITEM: 2025 INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT REPORT (IPM)

VOTING

Motion by:
Second by:

COMMISSIONERS	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT	RECUSE
Abene, Cathy					
Rucker, Charles					
Deshpande, Kedar					
Garcia, Jason					
Forney, Meg					

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 8:56 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Minneapolis
Park & Recreation Board

Resolution 2026-121

RESOLUTION APPROVING A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA FOR TREE RESEARCH AND OUTREACH LASTING FIVE YEARS STARTING IN 2026

Whereas, The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) is the steward of the Minneapolis park system;

Whereas, MPRB is the steward of the public urban forest in Minneapolis;

Whereas, The City of Minneapolis has been designated one of the 10 best cities for urban forests by American Forests, a national conservation organization;

Whereas, MPRB and the University of Minnesota (UMN) have had a long-term cooperative relationship regarding tree research and outreach that dates back to 1994;

Whereas, In 2010 the MPRB and the UMN entered into a formal Cooperative Agreement regarding tree research and outreach for a period of 5 years;

Whereas, Recognizing the value of this Cooperative Agreement it was renewed in 2015 and in 2020 for an additional 5 years, respectively;

Whereas, MPRB and the UMN research has yielded valuable information pertaining to tree selections, pest management, pruning and care;

Whereas, This information has been used to improve the management and sustainability of the urban forest through increased diversity of tree selections, staff training, and public education through outreach;

Whereas, Through this research agreement, the MPRB receives, from the UMN, an annual allotment of trees that are planted in parks and/or on boulevards; and

Whereas, This resolution is supported in Parks for All, the MPRB Comprehensive Plan 2021-2036, which sets the goals: Goal 6 to “Strengthen ecological connections;” and Goal 7 to “Connect through communications and technology;”

RESOLVED, That the Board of Commissioners approves a Cooperative Agreement between the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the University of Minnesota for tree research and outreach lasting five years starting in 2026; and

Minneapolis
Park & Recreation Board

RESOLVED, That the President of the Board and Secretary to the Board are authorized to take all necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

Minneapolis
Park & Recreation Board

TO: Operations and Environment Committee

FROM: Jeremy Barrick, Assistant Superintendent, Environmental Stewardship

DATE: 7/15/2026

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION APPROVING A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA FOR TREE RESEARCH AND OUTREACH LASTING FIVE YEARS STARTING IN 2026

BACKGROUND

For over 25 years, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) Forestry Department and the University of Minnesota (UMN) have partnered on research and outreach projects. In 2010, this partnership was formalized with a five-year cooperative agreement where the MPRB contributed financial support to the UMN for this work. This agreement was renewed in 2015 and again in 2020 with an expiration date in 2025. During the 15 years of the cooperative agreement the UMN has established research projects and tree trial plots in Minneapolis. The information learned from this research has positively influenced tree diversity guidelines, maintenance protocols and personnel management. It has also yielded over 1500 trees that have been planted in Minneapolis parks and boulevards. This project is currently housed in the UMN Department of Forest Resources and will be led by Professor Alicia Coleman and the team of researchers in the Urban Forestry Outreach, Research and Extension Lab & Nursery. This action considers another five-year agreement with the UMN.

In 1997 a ten-year assessment of preservation began in Minnehaha Falls Park by monitoring the health of 62 mature oaks located near an outdoor stage area and bus transport road. As a result, only one tree was lost. In 1999 UMN began sourcing and producing Dutch elm disease resistant elms for MPRB that were used on the Olson Memorial Highway median at Arbor Day 2004. This helped with selection of elms statewide and contributed to two publications, "Elms for the Twin Cities: A Guide for Selection and Maintenance (2006)" and "Pruning Young Elms (2010)." In 2014 underutilized trees were installed in Dean Park and the establishment of seedlings was tested in grow-tubes.

Surveying tree failures during storms in Minneapolis has occurred over 20 years. Data collected from storms in 1998 shaped the prediction and prevention of tree damage nationally. Examining trees lost in the June 2013 storm led to the 2014 Tree Failure Report and the recommendation to hire a Forestry Preservation Coordinator. Because new trees are grown with various root types, the Lake Nokomis Root Type study was conducted in 2016 to determine the best

information to use in tree purchase specifications. In 2017 the MPRB participated in the UMN's Youth Engagement in Arboriculture program as a way of exposing youth to careers in arboriculture.

In the agreement period of 2020-2025, the University of Minnesota initiated research at the request of the MPRB Forestry Department to address issues of chlorosis affecting pin oaks and regarding the health and prognosis for several young catalpa trees with delayed and sporadic budbreak across Minneapolis. At the time of this renewal, initial data collected as part of these studies indicate an incomplete picture. Additional data collection is required. The University of Minnesota also continued work on the Longitudinal Tree Survival Study started in 2014 to determine the survivability of newly planted trees through establishment.

The original cooperative agreement that went into effect in 2010 was renewed for one successive five-year term in 2015 and again in 2020. This cost of the new agreement (Attachment A) will remain the same as that of the 2020 agreement.

MPRB legal counsel has reviewed the Tree Planting Agreement as to form and legality.

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTIONS

September 1, 2010	Board authorized approval of a Cooperative Agreement between the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the University of Minnesota for tree research over five years at $30,000 per year.
December 2, 2015	Resolution 2015-351: Resolution Approving Amendment to the Cooperative Agreement Between the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the University of Minnesota Increasing the Annual Amount Paid for Tree Research by $13,139.02 to $43,139.02
September 16, 2020	Resolution 2020-303: Resolution Approving a Cooperative Agreement Between the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the University of Minnesota for Tree Research and Outreach Lasting Five Years Starting in 2020

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve the Cooperative Agreement between the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the University of Minnesota for tree research and outreach lasting five years starting in 2026.

This action is supported by the following goals and strategies in Parks for All, the MPRB

Comprehensive Plan 2021-2036.

Goal:	Strategy:
06. Strengthen ecological connections	6.2: Grow expertise toward longterm stewardship of natural areas and stormwater infrastructure in our parks to enhance protection, restoration, maintenance, and management practices.
06. Strengthen ecological connections	6.5: Utilize data-driven, equitable, science-based, regional, future-facing, ecological understanding in preserving, stewarding, maintaining, and improving natural areas, enhancing habitat connectivity, and improving and managing park infrastructure.
07. Connect through communications and technology	7.4: Educate staff and the community on critical issues facing the city and region, specifically: health and wellness benefits of parks; potential linkages between park investment, gentrification, and displacement; environmental and ecological issues; the benefits of, threats to, and care of the urban tree canopy, birds, and wildlife; strategies about how to decrease waste and plastic pollution; invasive species management and prevention; climate change impacts and resiliency; shared public responsibility for waste reduction, water quality, and city-wide tree canopy; indigenous acknowledgment, history, rights, culture and perspectives; park safety and security.

Attachments:

1. Attachment A - Cooperative Agreement MPRB UMN 2026-2031
2. Attachment B – MPRB UMN Cooperative Research Update Report 2020-2025

Jbr 7.15.2026

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

Between the City of Minneapolis, acting by and through its Park and Recreation Board
and
The Regents of the University of Minnesota

This Cooperative Agreement is made this 1st day of June 2026 by and between the City of Minneapolis, acting by and through its Park and Recreation Board, a body corporate and politic under the laws of Minnesota, 2117 West River Road, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411 (hereinafter "Park Board") and the Regents of the University of Minnesota, a Minnesota constitutional corporation, c/o Department of Forest Resources – Urban Forestry Outreach, Research & Extension Nursery and Lab, (1530 Cleveland Ave. N, Saint Paul, MN 55108).

Recitals and Statement of Purpose

WHEREAS, the Park Board owns, operates and maintains all parkland devoted to public use located in the City of Minneapolis;

WHEREAS, the Park Board has a Forestry Division that is responsible for maintaining, preserving and enhancing the urban forest in the City of Minneapolis;

WHEREAS, the University has a Department of Forest Resources with an Urban Forestry Outreach, Research & Extension Nursery and Lab division (hereinafter "UFore") that is responsible for, among other things, the research and development of tree species that will thrive in Minnesota and be resistant to certain diseases and invasive tree species; and the development of novel research projects and outreach programs for the benefit of urban forestry and arboriculture in Minneapolis.

WHEREAS, the Park Board and the University through UFore wish to work together in certain tree research projects to investigate new and existing tree species for hardiness and disease resistance relevant to the needs of the Park Board, to research tree maintenance methods and tree establishment strategies, and to engage in cooperative outreach to the general public.

NOW THEREFORE in consideration of the premises, and the agreements contained herein, the Park Board and the University agree as follows:

1. UFore shall make available land totaling one acre at the University's UFore Nursery to grow and support trees used for the research and outreach,

2. The research and outreach to be conducted shall be established by a board comprised of two Park Board personnel from the Forestry Division and two University UFore staff and/or faculty,

3. The trees grown and/or held on the UFore land designated for research and outreach are to be the property of the Park Board. Each year, from this set of trees, UFore shall designate a prearranged number of trees to be planted in Minneapolis by the Park Board.

4. At the end of each year that this Agreement is in effect, UFore shall provide the Park Board Forestry Division with a research update report.

5. The Park Board shall provide forty-seven thousand dollars ($47,000.00) each year to the UFore Nursery and Lab to be used for the following purposes: 1) to support staff needed to maintain the trees and assess them in the urban environments where the trees will be planted; 2) to purchase young trees and the basic supplies needed to care for and harvest them; 3) to support staff in data collection, reporting of ongoing research and outreach projects; and 4) to support staff in the implementation of new research and outreach projects, mutually agreed upon by the board described above.

6. In addition to providing forty-seven thousand dollars ($47,000) as specified in paragraph 5, during the harvesting of the plant materials, additional costs may be incurred by the Park Board in removing these trees from the University property onto Park Board property.

7. This Agreement may be modified only by an amendment signed by the parties.

8. This Agreement shall be effective on June 1, 2026, and shall remain in force for five (5) years from that date or until May 31, 2031, and shall renew automatically for one successive term of five (5) years unless either party decides not to renew this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this Cooperative Agreement.

MlNNEAPOLIS PARK &
RECREATION BOARD

By _____

Tom Olsen
Its: President

By _____

Jennifer Ringold
Its: Secretary

REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
MINNESOTA

By _____

_____
Its: _____

Research & Outreach Update Report

Ongoing Partnership of
Minneapolis Parks & Recreation Board and
University of Minnesota
Urban Forestry Outreach & Research Lab
2020-2025

URBAN FORESTRY
OUTREACH & RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover®

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Executive Summary

The research and outreach partnership between the University of Minnesota and the Minneapolis Parks & Recreation Board began in 1994 and has consistently yielded valuable information pertaining to tree selection, pest management, pruning, and care. This information has been used to improve the management and sustainability of the urban forest through increased diversity of tree selections, staff training, and public education through outreach. The research and outreach partnership is guided by a signed Cooperative Agreement and Resolution 2020-303 (Appendix 1).

The following report summarizes the core projects accomplished during the 2020-2025 Cooperative Agreement, which relate to urban & community forestry research, arboriculture & municipal forestry tools, and volunteer & outreach programs. Each project is described by a written project summary, methodological process, and key outcomes achieved during the grant period.

The following Principal Investigators were involved in the development and completion of projects during the 2020-2025 Cooperative Agreement:
2020-2021, Gary Johnson, Professor Emeritus of Urban and Community Forestry
2021-2022, Dr. Eric North, former Assistant Professor of Urban and Community Forestry
2022-2024, Ryan Murphy, Urban Forestry Outreach & Research Programs Manager
2024-2025, Dr. Alicia Coleman, Assistant Professor of Urban and Community Forestry

Report prepared by: Alicia Coleman and Ryan Murphy

Longitudinal Tree Survival Study

Project Summary

Since 2014, Minneapolis Parks & Recreation Board has systematically collected urban tree survival data from a randomized subset of young street and park trees across Minneapolis. Newly planted trees are often young in age and experience a degree of transplant shock or "post-transplant stress" following planting (Sherman et al. 2016), which can impair physiological function and reduce growth rates (Struve et al. 2000, Struve 2009). Moreover, establishment success and tree survival can vary based on nonlimiting edaphic conditions (e.g. nutrient availability, soil moisture, soil porosity) and by additional abiotic stressors like extreme weather patterns that affect physiological cycles, like the length of the growing season and cold hardiness (Struve 2009).

The purpose of this ongoing research project is 1) to assess longitudinal survival rates for trees under MPRB's care and compare these rates to "middle-of-the-road" survival rates from other cities (93-94%); 2) to determine factors that significantly affect Minneapolis' tree survival during its establishment period; and 3) to determine factors that significantly affect tree replacement following instances of mortality. Unlike a repeated inventory study, where trees of different ages and multiple assessment variables are compared together, this study was designed to study trees of the same age during their 5-year establishment period (signaled below-ground by extents of root elongation and the extension of the root system into the backfill soil and above-ground by girth increase, height extension, canopy spread and density, and growth rate (Leers et al. 2018)). In this study, survivorship is defined as the probability that the population will survive to the next year and survival rate is the annual proportion of surviving trees.

Process

Data collection for this project began in 2014, and each year, MPRB arborists visited the planting sites of approximately 200 trees each year. These same trees were revisited annually and selected with several priorities in mind, including differences in planting stock type and planting season, or completely at random (Table 1). Tree locations and sampling were derived from MPRB's TreeKeeper database.

Table 1. Summary of tree survival data collected

Cohort #	Monitoring period	Sampling method (stratification)	Total # individual trees recorded /cohort
1	2014-2019	Stock type	192
2	2015-2020	Stock type	200
3	2016-2021	Stock type	199
4	2017-2022	Stock type	200
5	2018-2023	Stock type	196
6	2019-2024	None (100% random)	198
7	2020-2025	None (100% random)	196
8	2021-2026	Season planted	190
9	2022-2027	Season planted	203
10	2023-2028	None (100% random)	200
		GRAND TOTAL	1,971

Each tree was assessed for a range of variables that have demonstrated impact on tree survival and mortality (Hilbert et al. 2019), including taxa characteristics (stock type, genus-species, DBH at planting), weather (drought events), planting site location (land use, service area, median width), and maintenance (presence of a watering bag). Tree survival was measured as a scale in order of visually declining tree condition, defined as Good, Fair, Poor, Living Buds, Living Cambium, Living Roots, Standing Dead, and Removed/Missing.

A life table (or mortality table) was used to assess age-specific mortality, survival rates, and survivorship. Life tables are common tools in population ecology and demography and are a supported approach for urban tree survival and mortality research (Roman et al. 2016). Survivorship curves were also generated from the life table to display the proportion of tree survivorship in the years following planting.

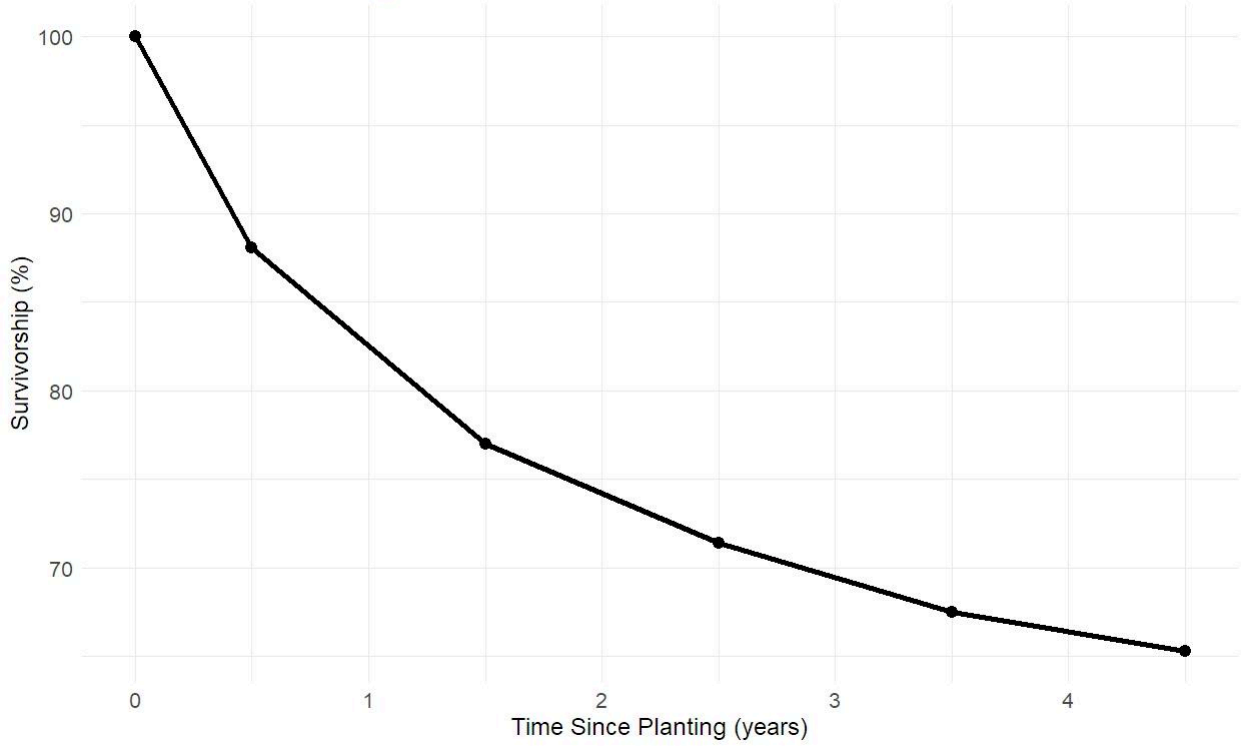
Outcomes

Initial results show that the survival rates of trees under MPRB's care are often above the "middle-of-the-road" rate of 93-94%, but only after 2 years post-planting (or the second year of establishment) (Table 2); by 4 years post-planting, annual survival rates reach nearly 97%. The finding of 87-88% survival rates in years 1 and 2 post-planting is not surprising or alarming in the context of lower survival rates in the first few years after planting (Hilbert et al. 2019).

Table 2. Life Table of Urban Tree Survival and Mortality Across 10 Cohort Years

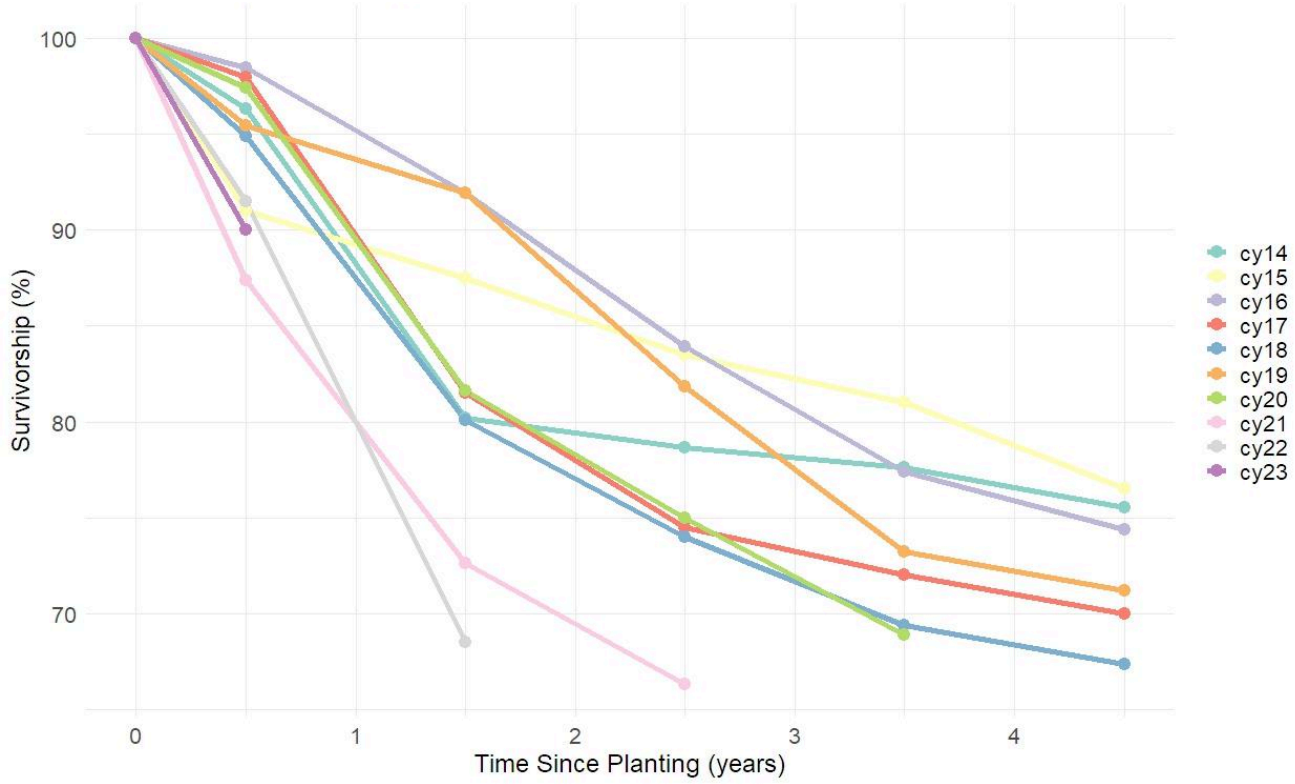
Entire Population of Cohorts								
Survey Year	Age, x	# alive at beginning of interval, Kx	# deaths in interval, Dx	# censored during interval, Wx	# at risk during interval, Yx	Annual mortality rate, qx	Annual survival rate, px	Survivorship to age x, lx
Planting	0	1971	117	0	1970	**0.119**	**0.881**	1.000
1	0.5	1854	223	180	1764	0.126	**0.874**	0.881
2	1.5	1451	99	138	1382	0.072	**0.928**	0.770
3	2.5	1214	63	126	1151	0.055	**0.945**	0.714
4	3.5	1025	31	135	957.5	0.032	**0.968**	0.675
5	4.5	859	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.653

Figure 1. Combined Survivorship Curve



Across the combined and cohort-based survivorship curves, these results predominantly present a “U”-shapes (known as Type III curve), where annual mortality is highest for young individuals, leading to a concave survivorship curve (Figure 1). Fewer cohorts (e.g. cy 16, cy19) present curves where mortality was more constant over time (known as a Type II curve) (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Survivorship Curves by Cohort



Analyses continue to be underway utilizing a novel application called the cox proportional hazards model, which evaluates the likelihood of tree mortality assuming that the effect of covariates is constant over time; in other words, the ratio of hazards between cohort groups remains similar over time. This analysis has been challenging to implement, given the variable wet- and dry-season weather conditions experienced in the Twin Cities in the last decade, however, eventual peer-review and publication of this research will be a valuable contribution to the scholarship of urban tree mortality and longitudinal data collection effort. To the best of our knowledge, longitudinal urban tree mortality research has only been published from Sacramento, California (Ko et al. 2015), New York City, New York (Lu et al. 2010) and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Bigelow et al. 2024) and has not been published from the upper Midwest.

Results of this project are intended to inform the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board Forestry department about post-planting tree survival rates, significant drivers of young tree mortality, and differences across planting site land uses and specific taxa. UMN personnel involved in this analysis include Dr. Alicia Coleman and Dr. Deborah Hilbert, contracted as a consultant.

Pin Oak Soil Amendment Study

Project Summary

The purpose of this study is to investigate the potential of 'C20 Soil Builder' amendment as a treatment for chlorotic foliage on pin oak (*Quercus palustrus*). Chlorosis is the visible yellowing or pale whitening of leaf tissue due to a lack of chlorophyll. Chlorosis is usually attributed to reduced availability or excessive accumulation of iron, manganese, nitrogen, potassium, magnesium, boron, zinc, copper, and molybdenum in the soil. Other factors such as low temperatures, reduced sunlight, high soil moisture, and excessive applications of irrigation or fertilizer-based calcium and phosphorus can also cause the development of chlorosis.

Chlorotic trees have been a longstanding interest in arboriculture research (e.g. Himelick and Himelick 1980). Products like 'C20 Soil Builder' by Precision Organics™ are intended to provide, "...a prescriptive carbon/nitrogen ratio to feed indigenous soil microbe population to decompress the soil and create a thriving, living, and productive environment that promotes root development, nutrient uptake, and overall plant health." More information can be found on Precision Organic™ 's website.

Figure 3. SPAD meter sampling on Lyndale Ave. Photo Courtesy of N. Neylon.

The purpose of this study was to assess the efficacy of 'C20 Soil Builder' in alleviating pin oak chlorosis. The study was initiated through the suggestion of MPRB arborists interested in improving tree appearance and to see if the 'C20 Soil Builder' was a practical solution.

Process

The 38th - 49th blocks of Lyndale Avenue, between the King Field and Lyndale neighborhoods, were chosen for this study. The pin oaks growing along Lyndale provided a useful test group as they were fairly evenly aged

with many displaying uniform chlorotic appearance.

In July and August 2021, a total of 40 trees in the boulevard were measured for taxonomic characteristics (e.g. DBH, crown density) After these measurements were collected, ground cover was removed to expose soil around the base of the tree, no more than 5 feet from the tree base or up to 50% of the canopy. The study trees were divided into one treatment and one "control" condition group (Table 3).

Trees in the control group were applied with a 2-3 inch wood mulch layer. Each tree was then irrigated with approximately 5 gallons of water. Trees in the treatment group also were measured for an exposed ring around the base of the tree, no more than 5 feet from the tree base or up to 50% of the canopy. Each tree then received approximately 6.9 lbs of the amendment per tree, following the manufacturer's label dosage of 20lbs per 1000 sq. ft of area under the tree canopy. Trees then were applied with a 2-3 inch wood mulch layer, followed by irrigation with approximately 5 gallons of water.

Table 3. Summary of 2022 tree data collected (note, 2021 was similar)

Condition	Application	Tree DBH	Tree Height	Crown Width
Control *n*=19 trees	Only mulch	*m*= 53.8 cm *s.d.*= 16.0 cm	*m*= 12.7 m *s.d.*= 2.9 m	*m*= 6.4 m *s.d.*= 1.2 m
Treatment *n*=21 trees	Mulch, plus "C20 Soil Builder" (by label dosage)	*m*= 51.9 cm *s.d.*= 15.8 cm	*m*= 11.5 m *s.d.*= 2.7 m	*m*= 6.3 m *s.d.*= 1.5 m
n= total number of trees, *m*= average, *s.d.*= standard deviation, cm= centimeter, m= meter, %= percentage				

A total of 20 non-destructive samples of leaf chlorophyll content were collected using a Soil Plant Analysis Development (SPAD) meter for each tree. The SPAD meter is a device that is used for non-destructive chlorophyll measurements and can indicate nutrient stress (Percival et al. 2008, Figure 3). SPAD meter samples were collected from 20 leaves along each trees' crown in early summer 2021. Trees were climbed using rope access by a certified arborist from UMN. Five leaves were collected at random from cardinal direction quadrants of the canopy. Efforts were made to collect from both interior leaves as well as

leaves on the periphery of the canopy. Using this same approach, SPAD meter readings were taken again from 20 randomly-selected leaves in July 2022 for each study tree.

Outcomes

To analyze SPAD meter readings, higher values indicate higher chlorophyll content and greater nitrogen sufficiency, while low values signal nitrogen stress. With only two years of data, the goal of an initial analysis isn't to determine statistical significance between the control and treatment groups, but rather, to begin evaluating overall trends across the experimental groups as well as within individual trees.

Between 2021 and 2022, the overall average SPAD meter rating increased across all sampled trees (Table 4) and trees in the treatment group displayed marginally larger SPAD values. The variation of the range (e.g. the difference between the lowest and highest values) across years was slightly more pronounced in the treatment group. Canopy density, which may indicate defoliation, across experimental groups was insignificantly lower in 2022 than 2021.

Table 4. Summary of SPAD Meter Values and Canopy Density

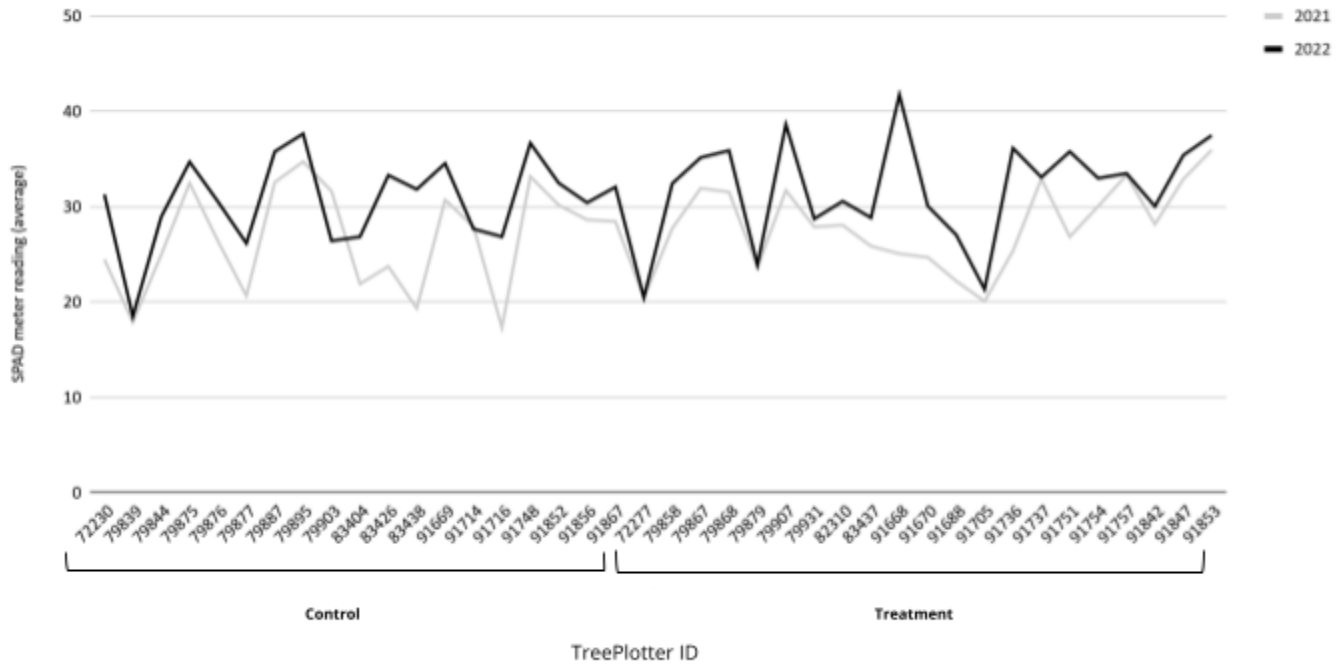
	SPAD meter reading		Canopy Density	
Condition	2021	2022	2021	2022
Control *n*=19 trees	*m*= 26.7 *range*= 17.3 - 34.7	*m*= 30.8 *range*= 18.5 - 37.8	*m*= 76.1% *s.d.*= 9.4%	*m*= 62% *s.d.*= 12%
Treatment *n*=21 trees	*m*= 27.9 *range* =20.1 - 36.0	*m*= 32.0 *range*= 20.2 - 42.4	*m*= 75.1% *s.d.*= 14%	*m*= 61% *s.d.*= 13%
n= total number of trees, *m*= average, *s.d.*= standard deviation				

Across individual trees, overall, SPAD values increased in nearly all samples between 2021 and 2022 (Figure 4). Some trees increased far more than others; for example, the tree with ID #91668 increased nearly 16 units; also, 8 trees, across both experimental groups, displayed less than 2 unit increase between years. Across experimental groups, a total of 5 trees displayed a higher SPAD value in 2021 than in 2022.

In summary, at time of reporting, initial data collected as part of this study indicate an incomplete picture of “C20 Soil Builder” as a solution to chlorotic pin oak trees. The outcomes of this research are contingent on additional years of data collection and accounting of confounding factors that may contribute to tree stress at each location, including historical events of site disturbance and as well as supplemental control measures for pin oak chlorosis (e.g. Watson and Himelick 2004). Consultation with a content expert in urban soil chemistry and physiological expressions of tree nutrient deficiencies would benefit future iterations of this research project.

Nonetheless, beyond assessing the ‘C20 Soil Builder’ product and attempting to alleviate chlorotic symptoms of boulevard pin oaks, this study was an example of how MPRB and UMN can initiate experiments that respond to direct observations and ideas proposed by MPRB arborists and tree inspectors. UMN personnel involved in this analysis included Dr. Eric North and his supporting research assistants.

Figure 4. Summary of SPAD Meter Readings Across Sampled Trees



Catalpa Health Survey

Project Summary

Northern catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*) has a native range in the lower Midwest and southern areas of the Eastern United States, but is now commonly planted in urban areas of southern Minnesota, including Hennepin County and Minneapolis. Catalpa has weaker wood as it ages, but in general, is known to tolerate harsh urban conditions like drought, occasional flooding, poor drainage, and road salt.

In early June 2025, Purdue University submitted a bulletin indicating delayed and sporadic budbreak for taxa that do not have native range to Minnesota. After considering cold hardiness, fall and spring temperature fluctuation, and species-specific chilling requirements, the author concluded,

> "The most probable cause of this year's delayed and inconsistent budbreak is the 'start-stop' weather pattern observed during spring 2025. As temperatures warmed, some buds initiated growth, only to be halted by subsequent cold snaps. These interruptions can severely slow development, and in some cases, cold injury to tender emerging buds may occur." (Daniel 2025)

Additionally, municipal foresters and arborists across southern Minnesota anecdotally observed this phenomenon with Northern catalpa as well, especially trees that were 6-10 years post-planting and clearly established. The purpose of this study was to investigate the phenologic traits and potential extent of dieback experienced by Northern catalpa in Minneapolis and Saint Paul.

Process

A semi-random sample of Northern catalpa trees (n=229) were assessed between June and July 2025 according to the USDA Urban Tree Monitoring Standards (Roman et al. 2020) for tree health and canopy dieback, as well as the extended BBCH-scale (Meier 1997) for budbreak stage. The sampled trees are part of other research projects and availability of historic imagery and maintenance records, including MPRB's longitudinal tree survival study

and PI Coleman's project to document "climate-ready" trees in Minnesota cities (LCCMR ID 2025-295).

Using Roman et al. 2020, research assistants documented information about the area surrounding the tree (e.g. land use), the planting site (e.g. boulevard, park), and the tree, including DBH, height, mortality status, and crown vigor. Of specific interest for this study, crown vigor is a 1-5 rating scale that represents the amount of branch mortality and twig dieback (see Table 5 for definitions).

Table 5. Description of crown vigor classes, based on Roman et al. (2020)

Crown Vigor	Description
1	Healthy; tree appears to be in reasonably good health; no major branch mortality or large broken branches; less than 10 percent cumulative fine twig dieback, foliage discoloration, and/or defoliation present.
2	Slightly unhealthy; fine twig dieback, foliage discoloration, and/or defoliation present in 10 to 25 percent of the crown; broken branches or crown area missing based on visual evidence of large broken (not pruned) or dead branches 25 percent or less.
3	Moderately unhealthy; fine twig dieback, foliage discoloration, and/or defoliation present in 26 to 50 percent of the crown; broken branches or crown area missing based on visual evidence of large broken (not pruned) or dead branches 50 percent or less.
4	Severely unhealthy; fine twig dieback, foliage discoloration, and/or defoliation present in more than 50 percent of the crown, but foliage is still present to indicate the tree is alive, broken branches or crown area missing based on visual evidence of large broken (not pruned) or dead branches more than 50 percent.
5	Dead; trees classified as dead must be completely dead above ground, with no green leaves, no live buds, and no green tissue under the bark.

Using Meier 1997, research assistants also documented the phenological development stages of each tree. The extended BBCH-scale measures for trees were converted into non-technical language and included Catalpa-specific images when possible (Table 6).

Table 6. Description of converted phenological development scale

Meier 1997, extended BBCH-scale (code & description)	Revised phenological development scale (code, description, reference image)	
00 Dormancy: leaf buds and the thicker inflorescence buds closed and covered by dark brown scales	0 Bud dormant, no sign of breaking	
09 Green leaf tips visible; brown scales fallen, buds enclosed by light green scales	1 Bud displays silver/ green tip	
10 First leaves separating: green scales slightly open, leaves emerging	2 Bud green, but tight, no leaves unfolding	
11 First leaves unfolded, axis of developing shoot visible	3 Leaves unfolding from bud	
15 More leaves unfolded, not yet at full size	4 Internodes visible, leaves hanging but not enlarged	
19 First leaves fully expanded	5 Internodes visible, leaves enlarged	

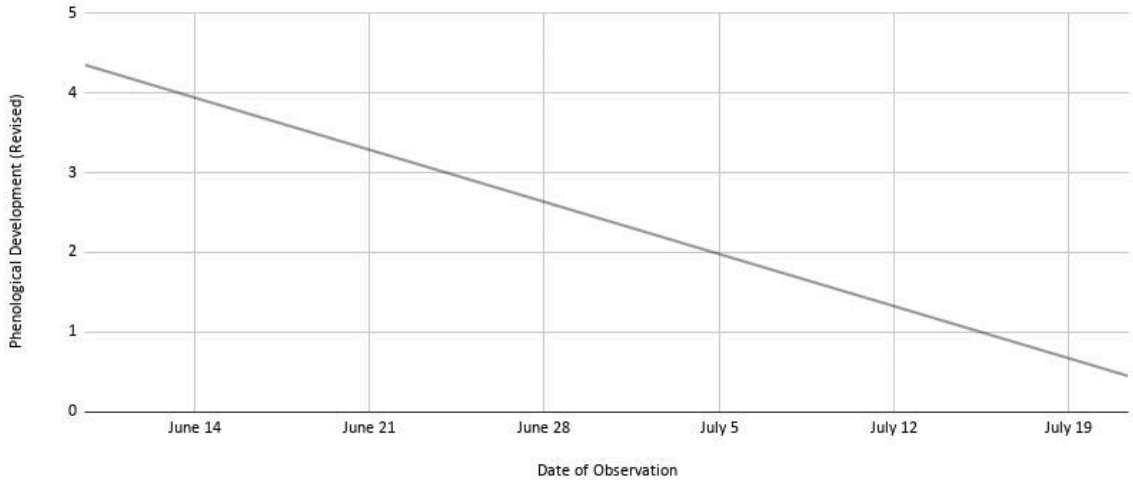
Outcomes

A summary of the sampled trees from Minneapolis and Saint Paul is listed in Table 7. Overall, phenological development trended downward and was far lower for trees that were visited later in July (Figure 5), which may happenstance. In general, trees with the healthiest crown vigor had leaves that were fully expanded, whereas trees that were dead or acutely dying had no visible bud swell (Figure 6). When considering tree DBH, in general smaller trees had leaves that were fully expanded and unfolded, but there were some smaller DBH classes (particularly 4-9") that displayed more phenological development variation (Figure 7). This subset of trees may be interesting to investigate further in future years.

Table 7. Summary of sampled trees

Planting sites	Total number of trees	Tree DBH	Tree Height	Crown Width
Sidewalk planting strip or cut out	*n*= 213	*m*= 4.5 in *s.d.*= 3.6 in	*m*= 20.6 ft *s.d.*= 9.9 ft	*m*= 12.7 ft *s.d.*= 6.7 ft
Managed landscape or park	*n*= 16	*m*= 4.7 in *s.d.*= 4.4 in	*m*= 20.0 ft *s.d.*= 9.3 ft	*m*= 14.2 ft *s.d.*= 10.7 ft
Grand total	*n*= 219	*m*= 4.6 in *s.d.*= 3.6 in	*m*= 20.6 ft *s.d.*= 9.8 ft	*m*= 12.8 ft *s.d.*= 7.0 ft

Figure 5. Phenological development trend of sampled trees by date of observation



In summary, at time of reporting, initial data collected as part of this study indicate an incomplete picture of weather-induced dieback or phenological development of *Catalpa speciosa*. The outcomes of this research are contingent on additional years of data collection and accounting of confounding factors that may contribute to tree stress, survival, and mortality at each location. Consultation with a content expert in tree phenology, physiology, and marginally-hardy woody plants would benefit future iterations of this research project.

Nonetheless, this study was another example of how MPRB and UMN can initiate experiments that respond to direct observations and ideas proposed by MPRB arborists and tree inspectors. UMN personnel involved in this analysis included Dr. Alicia Coleman and her supporting research assistants.

Figure 6. Crown vigor and phenological development of sampled trees

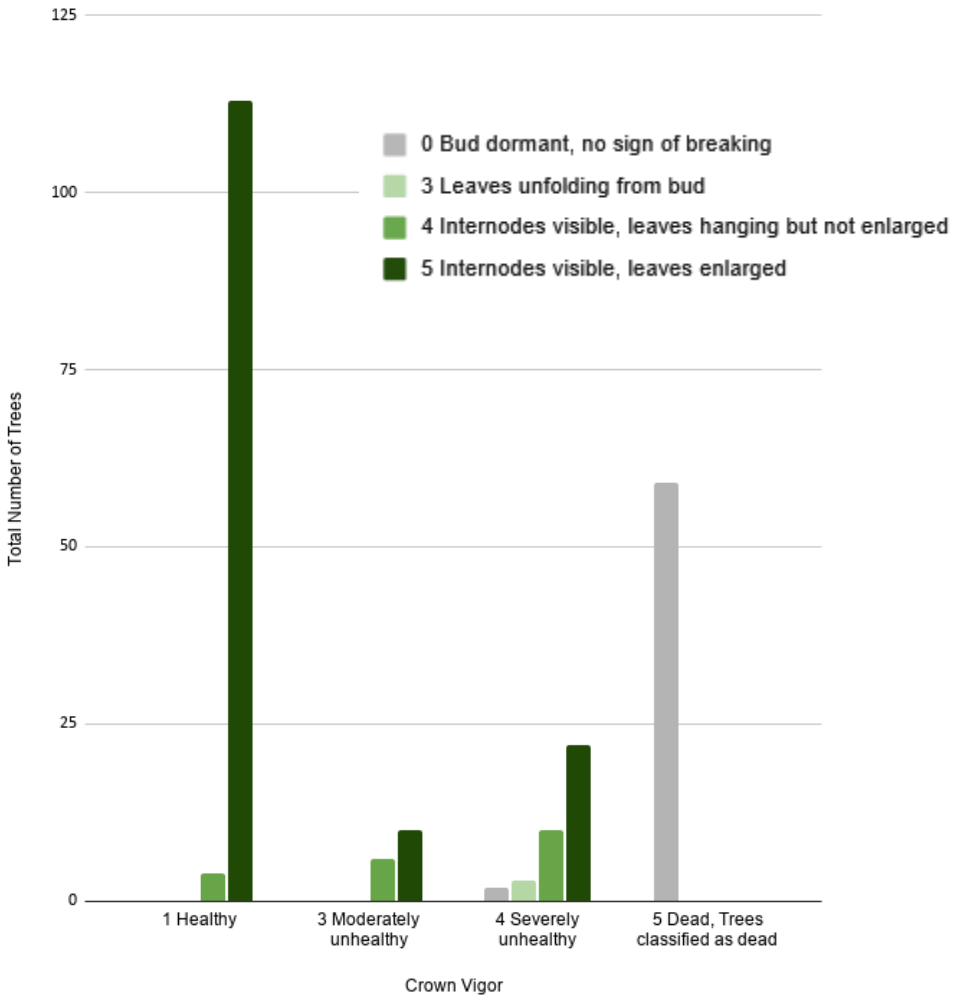
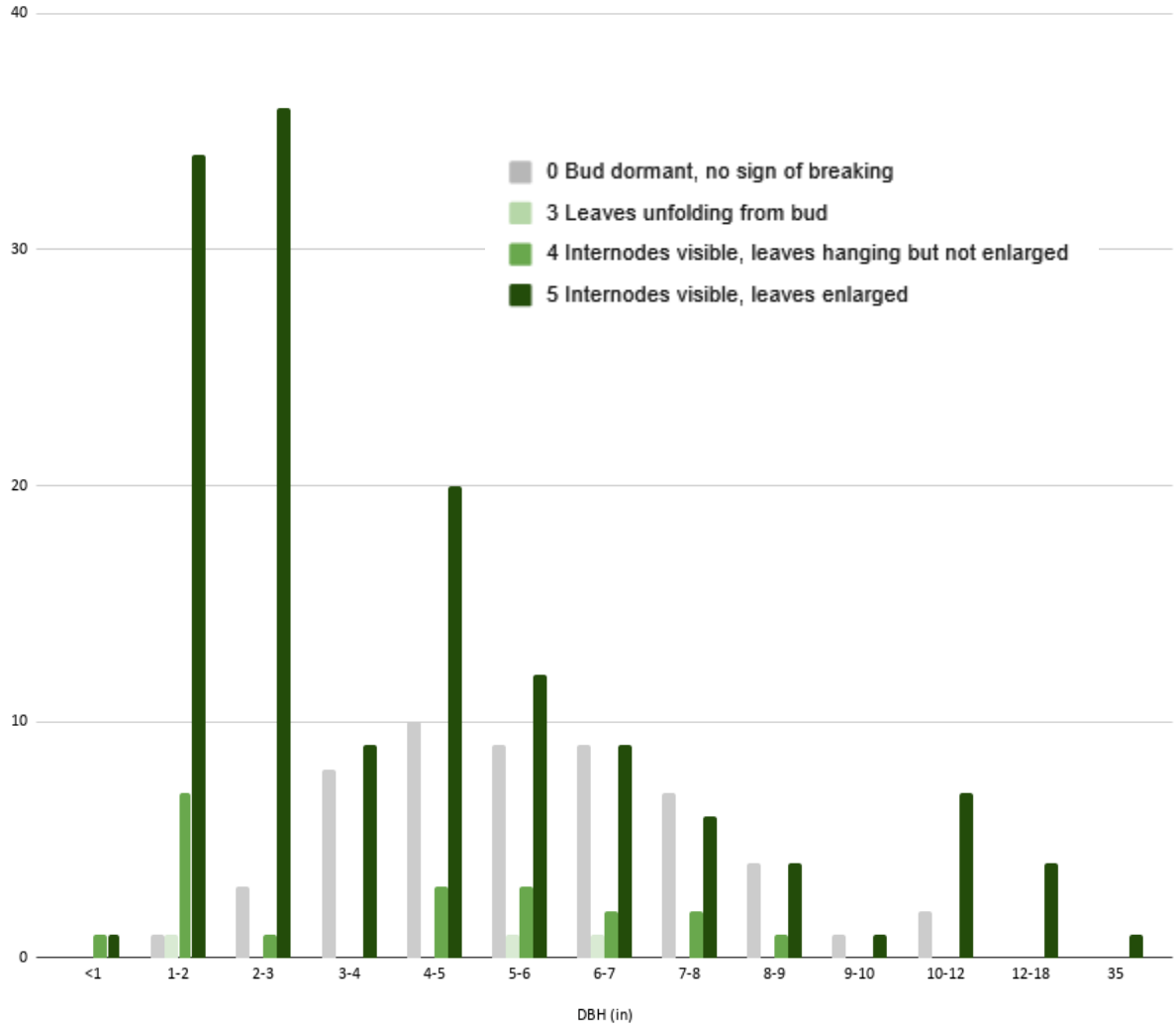


Figure 7. DBH and phenological development of sampled trees

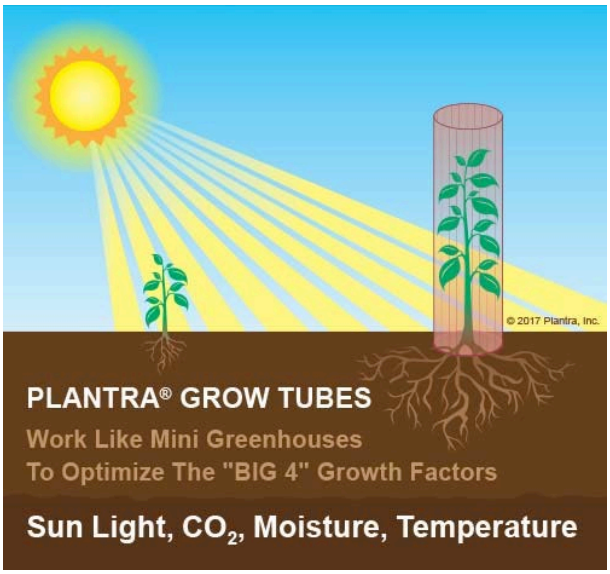


Planting Trees with Grow Tubes

Project Summary

Plantra® Grow Tubes are a protective, thin-walled “shelter” that are designed to prevent young tree herbivory while also stimulating growth by way of light diffusion (through translucent walls) and air movement (through wall vents) (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Plantra® Grow Tube functionality (left) and example on a young tree (right). Photos courtesy of Plantra®.



Since 2014, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board has been using Grow Tubes with young tree stock. The purpose of this project was to informally assess young tree survival and mortality when planted with Grow Tubes. Grow Tubes are expected to provide a low-cost way to protect newly planted, young tree seedlings from herbivory or other mechanical damage in the vulnerable early years of establishment.

Process

Small seedling trees were planted into Grow Tubes in various parks and woodlands around Minneapolis starting in 2014. Each Grow Tube was accompanied by a flexible

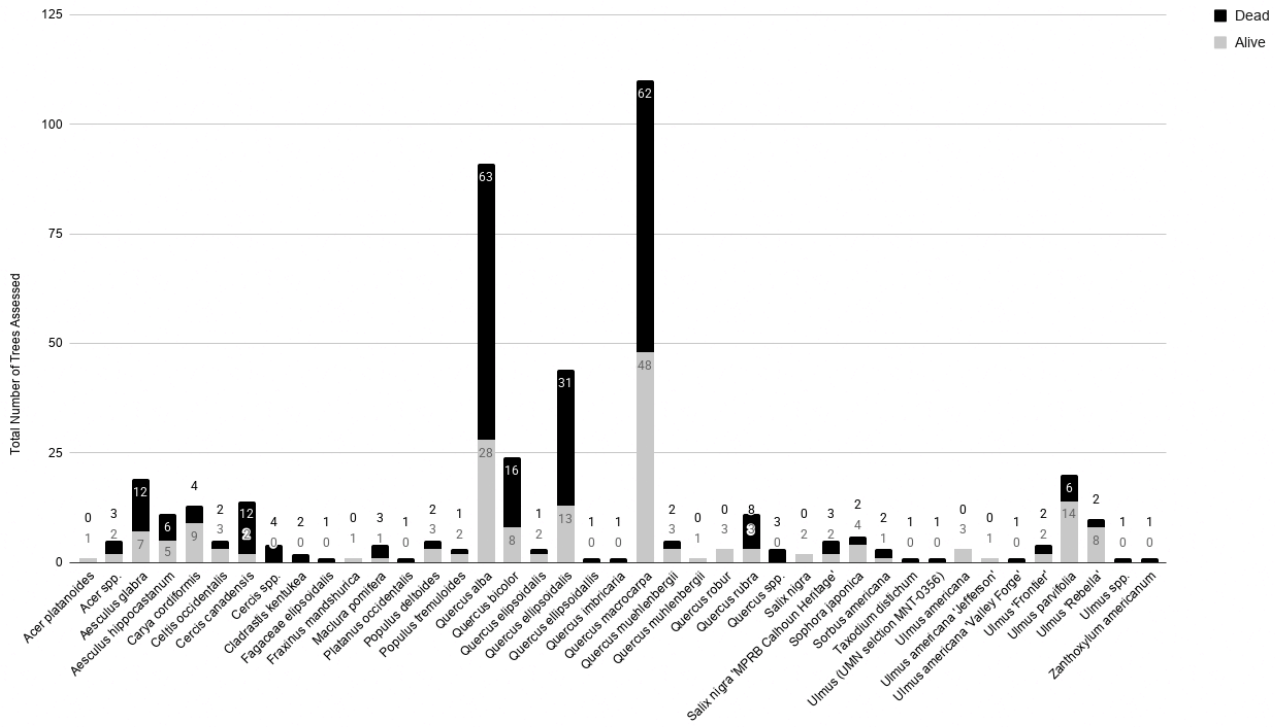
fiberglass stake for the stability of the tube and an upright central leader. Trees were visited annually to assess mortality and perform basic maintenance on the Tree Tubes. In some instances, trees which were found dead were replaced with new seedlings.

Outcomes

A total of 445 trees planted with Grow Tubes were assessed for survival and mortality. This sample of trees were planted between 2014 and 2022, representing a variety of tree species. Of the trees assessed, 182 were found to still be alive and 263 were dead (Figure 9).

In summary, across species, more trees were found to be dead than to be alive, but given the higher mortality rates of newly planted trees in the first years post-planting (Hilbert et al. 2019), this finding may be entirely unrelated to the Grow Tubes. Taxa with more than 10 trees assessed and expressed survival rates greater than 70% include *Ulmus* 'Rebella' and *Ulmus parvifolia;* this finding is not to suggest that *Ulmus spp.* have higher between-genus survival rates but this may be a worthwhile area of future research - especially if annual investments in smaller, less expensive young tree seedling stock is desirable. UMN personnel involved in this analysis included Gary Johnson and his supporting research assistants.

Figure 9. Distribution of Assessed Grow Tube Tree Survival and Mortality Across Taxa



Mapping Plantable Space

Project Summary

In urban areas across North America, urban natural spaces are defined by legacies of historical land use and current development priorities. Spatial planning scenarios and decision support tools are one way to plan for and right-size local urban greening efforts, but the best available tools in Minnesota (e.g. Growing Shade, Tree Equity Score) are not designed to account for the ideal growing conditions of urban trees (e.g., above ground branch growth, below-round interference with utilities), hyperlocal regulatory restrictions related to trees (e.g., planting within wetlands), and community vision plans (e.g., prioritizing tree planting in low-income neighborhoods).

This research comprehensively evaluates a new methodological approach that models where trees can be planted using high-resolution land cover alongside constraints imposed by local policies, regulations, and design standards. This research has the following long-term goals: 1) to integrate land use, land cover, and tree-related design standards into a plantable space model, 2) to identify which types of trees can be planted, and 3) to assess the potential environmental benefits and tradeoffs of various design standards. Minneapolis and Saint Paul serve as pilot cities for this methodology and tool.

Process

Two datasets were processed for this analysis. First, tree-related municipal policies and design standards were extracted from municipal codes, zoning regulations, and city planning documents. A systematic keyword search guided the extraction of relevant information from these documents. To verify data, consultation with the city foresters, land-use planners, and parks and recreation representatives were prioritized. After coding, an inter-rater reliability process was used to assess and correct for standardized data input.

Second, GIS data was collected and processed to evaluate the physical tree-planting potential. Federal, state, and open access GIS repositories were primarily used and supplemented by municipal sources. Suitable planting spaces were identified using pre-classified land cover datasets, prioritizing 1-meter or higher resolution (Wu et al. 2008). Land cover classes were reclassified based on similar research (e.g. Merry et al. 2013) into four categories: “Existing tree canopy” (deciduous and evergreen canopy); “Not plantable”

(impervious surfaces such as buildings, roads, and parking lots); “Dig-ready plantable space” (soft surfaces such as turfgrass, bare soil, low vegetation); and “Water” (waterbodies and wetlands).

These datasets were then combined, further assessed for special case areas (e.g. removing places like soccer fields) in order to generate models of spatially-explicit plantable space.

Outcomes

Overall, Minneapolis has around 12% plantable space in the city boundaries, not yet excluding local policy and design standard restrictions (Figure 10); when these restricted areas are removed, the total amount of plantable space reduced to 6.5% of the city’s land area (Figure 11).

Through this initial analysis and assessment of tree-related policies, regulations, and design standards, we discovered that local policies and design standards for urban forests vary significantly across cities. Tree preservation ordinances were less common, whereas tree planting design standards were more prevalent but inconsistent between cities. While most GIS data was collected without issues, design standard-specific data, particularly critical infrastructure with tree planting restrictions (e.g., fire hydrants) required direct contact with municipal staff or was not available to share for purposes of a research project like this. Future iterations of this project will answer the remaining research objectives stated in the project summary.

This research bridges spatial analysis with policy evaluation in urban vegetation management. By integrating local policy and design standards in GIS, this research helps municipal and regional planners align urban forestry initiatives within existing regulations. The data produced by this research can also incorporate population demography or nature equity considerations to ensure tree planting efforts serve the greatest volume of residents. Finally, this research also highlights the value of interdisciplinarity - integrating geospatial analysis, policy analysis, and urban forestry - which is a valuable demonstration tool for projects with potential real-world relevance. UMN personnel involved in this analysis included Dr. Alicia Coleman and her supporting research assistants.

Figure 10. Overview of plantable space in Minneapolis-Saint Paul before local policies, regulations, and design standard planting restrictions

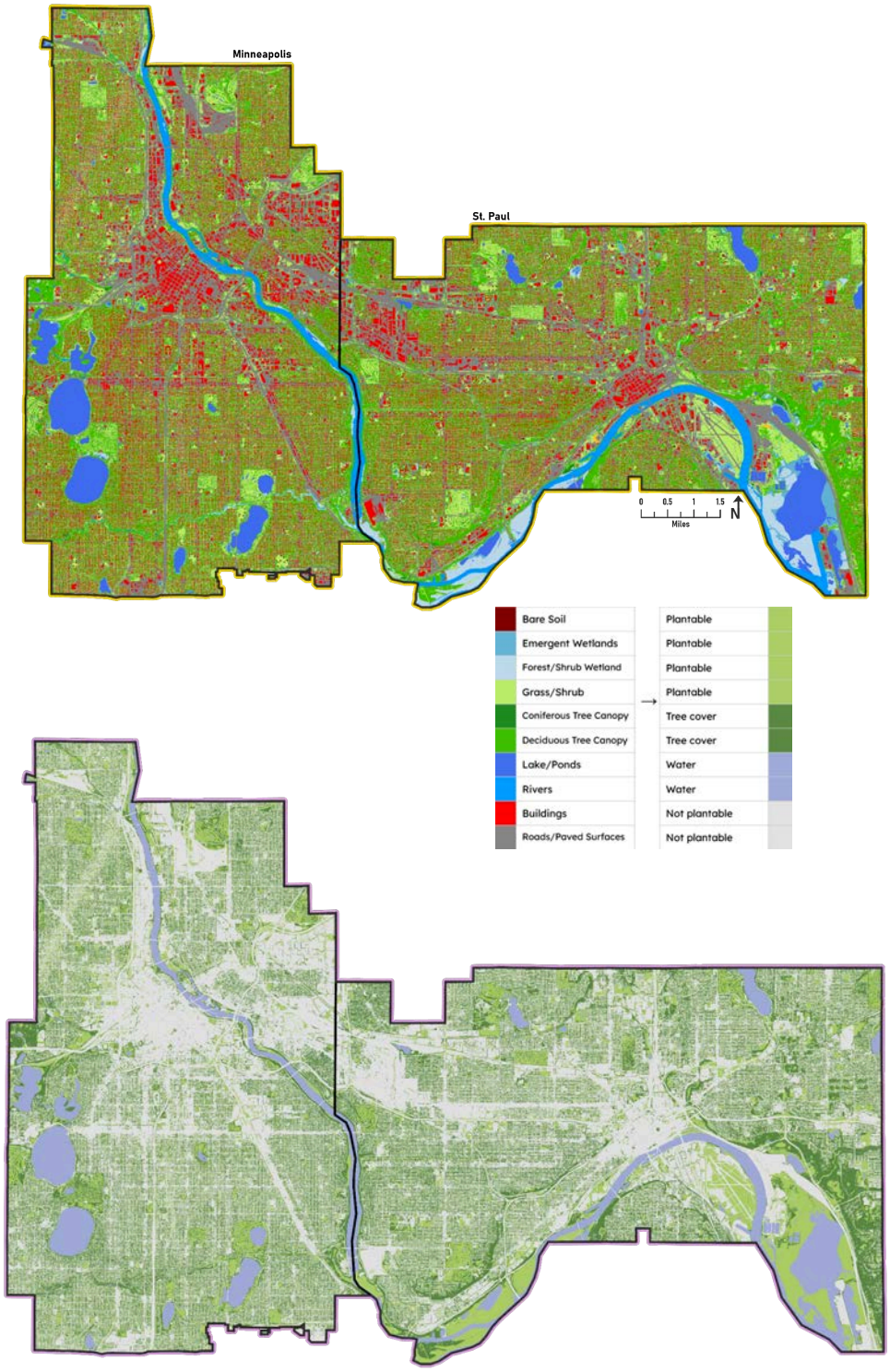
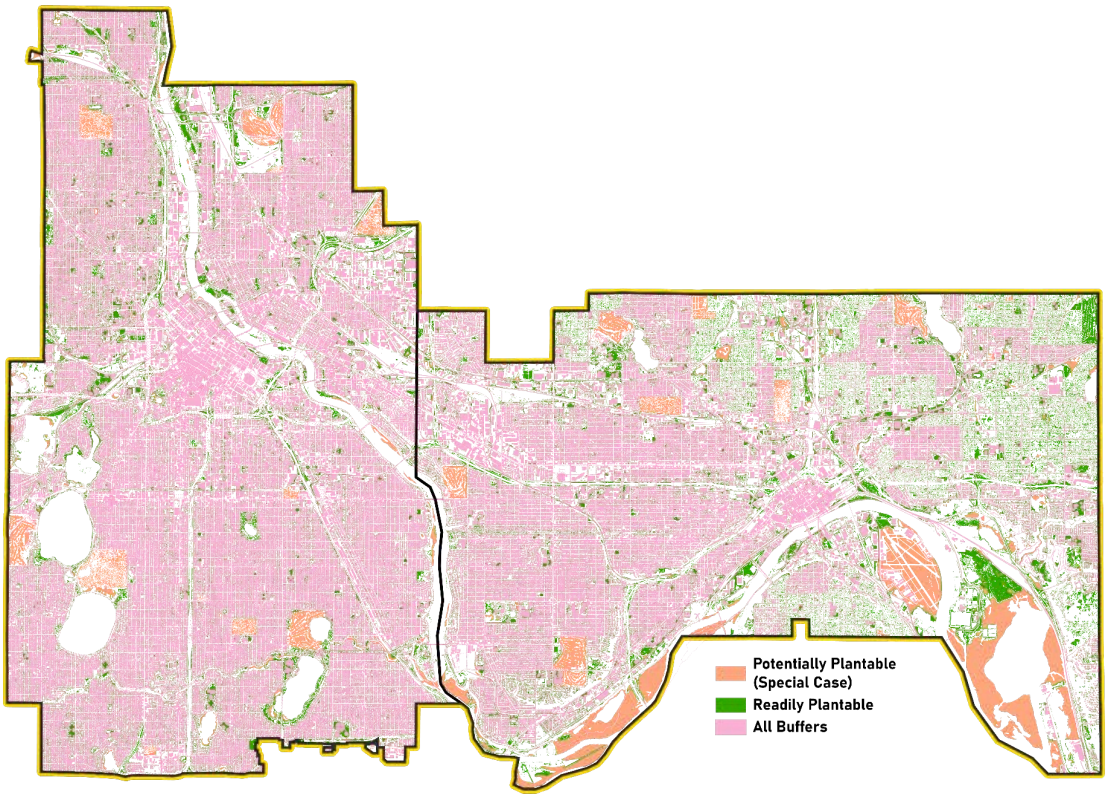


Figure 11. Overview of plantable space in Minneapolis-Saint Paul after local policies, regulations, and design standard planting restrictions



	Baseline Plantable Space	Total Policy-Reg.-Std. Buffers	Potentially Plantable	Readily Plantable	New Total	% Change (baseline → new)
St. Paul	12.7%	17.9%	3.7%	6.2%	9.9%	**−21.9%**
Minneapolis	11.6%	28.5%	1.3%	5.2%	6.5%	**−44.1%**

Volunteer & Outreach Programs

Heritage Tree Project

Project Summary

The goal of the Minneapolis Heritage Tree program is to find and give official recognition to trees that are very large, very old, and/or are an important part of our history or culture (MPRB 2026). MPRB evaluated nominated trees using methods established by American Forests, and includes measurements of height, circumference, and crown spread (American Forests, n.d.).

The goal of this project is to evaluate a selection of heritage trees, collect viable seed from seed-producing trees, produce seedlings, grow them to caliper size, and plant them in Minneapolis. It is expected that the progeny of Heritage Trees may bear survival traits and genetics that can tolerate difficult urban environments.

Process

Several criteria were developed to evaluate the list of Minneapolis Heritage Trees and determine if seeds would be collected. First, trees were listed as monoecious or dioecious and only seed-producing trees were further considered. Clonal vegetative propagation techniques such as grafting or rooted cuttings could be utilized to propagate trees of interest which don't produce seed.

Then, these species of trees were listed for their forecasted ability to tolerate warming temperatures and climate change, using the Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science Twin Cities Urban Forest Summary (NIACS 2018) and a published assessment of street tree vulnerability in the upper Midwest (Brandt et al. 2021). Lastly, permissions were gathered to access the trees from public and private property owners; ground-based seed collection was prioritized and it was noted that aerial access may be required if attempted again in the future. The final list of trees and additional seed collection information derived from the literature are summarized in Table 8, and seeds were collected with enough time to reach maturity.

Table 8. Minneapolis Heritage Trees selected for seed collection

Species	Private or Public	Vulnerability Rating	Seed Collection
Acer rubrum	Public	Low-Moderate	April-July
Acer saccharinum	Private	Low-Moderate	April-June
Acer saccharum	Private	Moderate-High	Shortly before autumn leaf fall
Aesculus glabra	Private	Low-Moderate	September-October
Carya tomentosa	Public	Low-Moderate	September-December
Carya cordiformis	UMN	Low-Moderate	September-December
Carya ovata	Public	Low-Moderate	September-December
Catalpa speciosa	Private	Moderate	October-February
Cercis canadensis	Private	Low-Moderate	Fall-winter
Fagus grandifolia	Private	Low-Moderate	First frost
Gynocladus dioicus	Public	Low	Winter-spring
Juglans nigra	Public	Low-Moderate	September -October
Pinus strobos	Private	Moderate-High	Seeds disperse within the month of cone maturity
Platanus occidentalis	Public	Low-Moderate	February through May
Prunus americana	Private	Low-Moderate	July-August
Prunus serotina	Public	High	June-August
Quercus alba	Private	Low-Moderate	August-November
Quercus macrocarpa	Public	Low	August-November
"The Ancient Oak"	Public	Low	August-November
"The Rockwood Oak"	Private	Low	August-November
Tillia americana	Private	Moderate-High	September-October

Next, seeds were collected from viable trees in 2024. Seeds were handled and stored according to species-specific practices; for example, cold stratification. Seeds were sown in

seed germination media and placed in mist houses to maintain soil moisture. Germination techniques were generally drawn from the USDA Silvics Manual (2004) and completed in the UMN Plant Growth Facility greenhouses.

Outcomes

This pilot project did not result in significant germination. If it had, the next step would have been to grow the seedlings into 1" outdoor ready size as field grown bareroot or containerized stock. Pot size would be upgraded depending on root type. Lastly, the germinated trees would be planted back into Minneapolis. An appropriate site would be assessed according to a soil test, soil moisture availability, sun exposure, and microclimate conditions for marginally hardy species and trees would be planted according to best management practices. These trees would be watered seasonally for two seasons, and tree survival and health data would be collected in May - June annually.

This project has promise to continue in the future. Since heritage trees have known, longstanding survival, they may harbor genetics that are worthwhile to investigate for urban hardiness. An expanded source of seed stock will benefit urban reforestation efforts across planting site types and could be a new form of community engagement and outreach because heritage trees are not only a genetic resource, but a biological history of the area. UMN personnel involved in this analysis included Ryan Murphy and supporting research assistants.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. 2020-2025 Cooperative Agreement

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

Between the City of Minneapolis, acting by and through its Park and Recreation Board
and
The Regents of the University of Minnesota

This Cooperative Agreement is made this 1st day of October 2020 by and between the City of Minneapolis, acting by and through its Park and Recreation Board a body corporate and politic under the laws of Minnesota, 2117 West River Road, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411 (hereinafter "Park Board") and the Regents of the University of Minnesota, a Minnesota constitutional corporation, c/o Department of Forest Resources – Urban Forestry Outreach, Research & Extension Nursery and Lab, (1530 Cleveland Ave. N, Saint Paul, MN 55108) (hereinafter "UFore").

Recitals and Statement of Purpose

WHEREAS, the Park Board owns, operates and maintains all parkland devoted to public use located in the City of Minneapolis;

WHEREAS, the Park Board has a Forestry Division that is responsible for maintaining, preserving and enhancing the urban forest in the City of Minneapolis;

WHEREAS, the University has a Department of Forest Resources with an Urban Forestry Outreach, Research & Extension Nursery and Lab division (hereinafter "UFore") that is responsible for, among other things, the research and development of tree species that will thrive in Minnesota and be resistant to certain diseases and invasive tree species; and the development of novel research projects and outreach programs for the benefit of urban forestry and arboriculture in Minneapolis.

WHEREAS, the Park Board and the University through UFore wish to work together in certain tree research projects to investigate new and existing tree species for hardiness and disease resistance relevant to the needs of the Park Board, to research tree maintenance methods and tree establishment strategies, and to engage in cooperative outreach to the general public.

NOW THEREFORE in consideration of the premises, and the agreements contained herein, the Park Board and the University agree as follows:

1. UFore shall make available land totaling one acre at the University's UFore Nursery to grow and support trees used for the research and outreach,

2. The research and outreach to be conducted shall be established by a board comprised of two Park Board personnel from the Forestry Division and two University UFore staff and/or faculty,

3. The trees grown and/or held on the UFore land designated for research and outreach are to be the property of the Park Board. Each year, from this set of trees, UFore shall designate a prearranged number of trees to be planted in Minneapolis by the Park Board.

4. At the end of each year that this Agreement is in effect, UFore shall provide the Park Board Forestry Division with a research update report.

5. The Park Board shall provide forty-seven thousand dollars ($47,000.00) each year to the UFore Nursery and Lab to be used for the following purposes: 1) to support staff needed to maintain the trees and assess them in the urban environments where the trees will be planted; 2) to purchase young trees and the basic supplies needed to care for and harvest them; and 3) to support staff in data collection, reporting of ongoing research and outreach projects; and 4) to support staff in the implementation of new research and outreach projects, mutually agreed upon by the board described above.

6. In addition to providing forty-seven thousand dollars ($47,000) as specified in paragraph 5, during the harvesting of the plant materials, additional costs may be incurred by the Park Board, at the Park Board's expense, in removing these trees from the University property onto Park Board property.

7. This Agreement may be modified only by an amendment signed by the parties.

8. This Agreement shall be effective on October 1, 2020 and shall remain in force for five (5) years from that date or until September 30, 2025 and shall renew automatically for one successive term of five (5) years unless either party decides not to renew this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this Cooperative Agreement.

MINNEAPOLIS PARK & RECREATION BOARD

By _____

Jono Cowgill
Its: President

By _____

Jennifer Ringold
Its: Secretary

REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

By _____

Amy Rollinger
Its: Assistant Director

AN ACTION, RESOLUTION OR ORDINANCE

In accordance with Article VI, Section 6.2(j), of the City Charter, there is herewith submitted to you, the Mayor of the City of Minneapolis, an action, resolution or ordinance adopted by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board which you may approve by affixing your signature herein below or if you disapprove of same to return to the Board, with your objection thereto, by depositing the same with the Secretary of the Board to be presented to the Board at their next meeting where the question of its passage will be put again before the Board.

7.3 That the Board adopt Resolution 2020-303 captioned as follows:

Resolution 2020-303

Resolution Approving a Cooperative Agreement Between the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the University of Minnesota for Tree Research and Outreach Lasting Five Years Starting in 2020

PASSED_____

Secretary of the Board

☑ APPROVED ☐ VETOED

Mayor

Offered by: Larrisha Vetaw

Seconded by: Meg Forney

Resolution 2020-303

Resolution Approving a Cooperative Agreement Between the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the University of Minnesota for Tree Research and Outreach Lasting Five Years Starting in 2020

Whereas, The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) is the steward of the public urban forest in Minneapolis;

Whereas, The City of Minneapolis has been designated one of the 10 best cities for urban forests by American Forests, a national conservation organization;

Whereas, the MPRB and the University of Minnesota (UMN) have had a long-term cooperative relationship regarding tree research and outreach that dates back to 1994;

Whereas, In 2010 the MPRB and the UMN entered into a formal Cooperative Agreement regarding tree research and outreach for a period of 5 years;

Whereas, Recognizing the value of this Cooperative Agreement it was renewed in 2015 for an additional 5 years;

Whereas, The MPRB and the UMN research has yielded valuable information pertaining to tree selections, pest management, pruning and care;

Whereas, This information has been used to improve the management and sustainability of the urban forest through increased diversity of tree selections, staff training and public education through outreach;

Whereas, Through this research the MPRB receives from the UMN an annual allotment of trees that are planted in parks and/or on boulevards;

Whereas, The wording of the agreement has been reviewed and approved by legal counsel;

Whereas, Increased costs associated with this research and outreach has necessitated that the annual amount of the agreement be increased from $43,139.02 annually to $47,000 annually;

Whereas, The annual payments for this agreement are made from a Forestry Department revenue fund and not the general fund; and

Whereas, This resolution is supported by the MPRB 2007-2020 Comprehensive Plan, which envisions "Urban Forests, Natural Areas and Waters that endure and captivate;"

Minneapolis
Park & Recreation Board

TO: Operations & Environment Committee

FROM: Jeremy Barrick, Assistant Superintendent, Environmental Stewardship

DATE: July 15, 2026

SUBJECT: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING INITIATIVES STUDY ITEM

BACKGROUND

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's Youth Employment and Training Initiatives (YETI) includes Teen Teamworks, Power Crews, Specialty Crews, and Minneapolis Park Corps.

Teen Teamworks is the MPRB's foundational youth employment program focusing on teenagers ages 14 to 17. Power Crew participants must be at least 16 years old as they learn to use maintenance power tools. Specialty Crews vary annually and may include a teen crew on bikes to help with trail maintenance or a garden crew at Upper Harbor Terminal Park. Minneapolis Park Corps, launched in 2024, offers paid training for young adults ages 18–24 through internal MPRB departments and partner organizations.

Staff will provide an overview of MPRB's youth employment and training initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION

This discussion item supports the following goals and strategies in Parks for All, the MPRB Comprehensive Plan 2021-2036.

Goal 8: Cultivate a thriving workforce Strategy 8.04: Implement youth programs, mentorship, and training across the agency that supports deliberate career pathways towards full-time employment with livable wages and that build relationships between youth and park staff across all departments to foster youth development and safety and to build the next generation of park stewards.

ATTACHMENTS

N/A

Jbr 7.15.2026.