

A Cedar Rapids Case Study

Benefits of Street Trees \$5 million annually

- Air Quality
- Energy Savings
- Carbon Sequestration (removing carbon dioxide from atmosphere)
- Stormwater Retention
- Increased Property Values
- Reduced Water Treatment Costs

Street Tree Costs \$1.2 million annual budget

- Pest Management
- Planting
- Removal
- Maintenance
- Canopy Management

Benefit to Cost Ratio

4:1



Education and public awareness are important aspects of the work undertaken by Trees Forever. Our conservation orientation helps improve the world and environment in which we live immediately, and for the future. Understanding the importance of our natural environment is paramount in helping government leaders and individuals make decisions that will benefit our world.

Our Woodland Legacy: Giving Voice and Value to our Natural Assets is a Trees Forever Program in partnership with the Holloway Family Environmental Trust that seeks to raise public awareness of how trees, woodlands, and natural areas are community assets that provide real benefits, and therefore need to be protected.

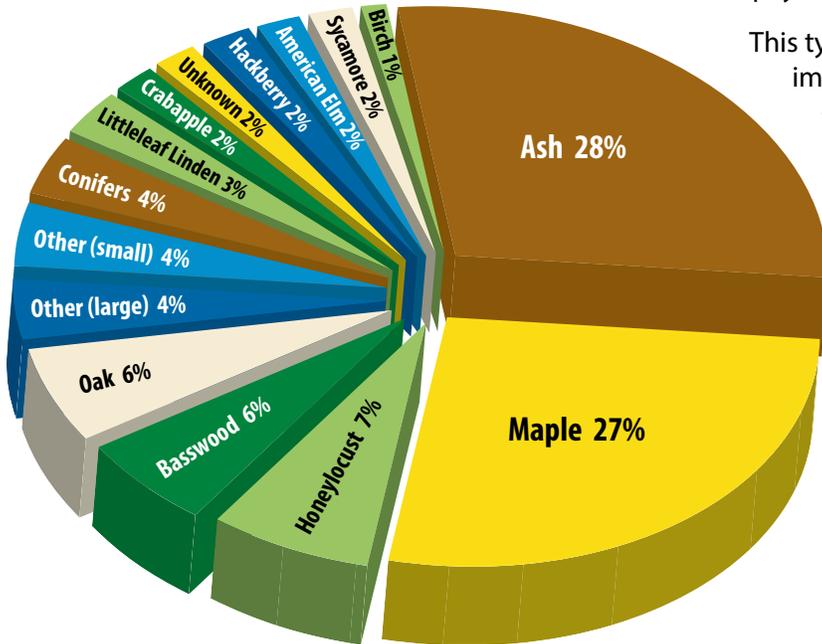
As part of the *Our Woodland Legacy* program, Trees Forever, in partnership with Coe College Biology Department and with support from Marilyn Magid, conducted tree inventories in Cedar Rapids. With a population of nearly 121,000 people residing over 63.4 square miles, Cedar Rapids has an estimated 35,000 publicly maintained street trees.

photo: iTree volunteers work to identify a tree in an older section of Marion, Iowa. Results from similar inventories conducted in neighboring Cedar Rapids helped quantify the benefits of trees.

Street Trees Benefits Outweigh Management Costs

Using i-Tree software developed by the USDA Forest Service along with Geographic Information System (GIS) technology, the illustrations on this flyer showcase our conclusions. The answer is YES – the benefits do outweigh the costs. Trees Forever worked with the City of Cedar Rapids to determine the monetary benefits from street trees. We found for every one dollar spent on trees, taxpayers received four dollars back in public benefits!

Composition of Street Trees in Cedar Rapids, Iowa



This type of information can help us address another imminent threat. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has been devastating states like Michigan and Illinois for several years. In 2010 the Emerald Ash Borer was found in Allamakee County in northeast Iowa and has since been spreading across the state.

In the coming years, Emerald Ash Borer has the potential to infest and destroy ash tree populations that represent approximately 28 percent of Cedar Rapids' street trees. Imagine your city with over a quarter of its trees gone! This will have devastating economic, environmental, and social impacts. We must prepare for the impending threat to our urban tree canopy.

“Our studies concluded that for every \$1 spent on trees, taxpayers received \$4 back in public benefits!”

Shannon Ramsay
Founding President and CEO
Trees Forever

Annual Financial Benefit of Street Trees in Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Street Tree Benefits	Average \$ value per tree	Average \$ value per resident	Citywide \$ value total
Stormwater reduction savings	\$51	\$15	\$1.8 million
Property value increase	\$34	\$10	\$1.3 million
Energy savings (electricity & natural gas)	\$42	\$12.50	\$1.5 million
Air quality improvement	\$7	\$2	\$250,000
Carbon dioxide reduction	\$6	\$1.5	\$200,000
Total	\$140	\$41	\$5 million

Join Trees Forever on its mission to plant and care for trees and the environment by empowering people, building community and promoting stewardship.

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