

ESTABLISHING AND STRENGTHENING INTERDEPARTMENTAL COOPERATION AND  
EXPECTATIONS REGARDING THE FOREST AND TREE CANOPY ECOSYSTEMS AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE IN DANE COUNTY

The tree canopy ecosystems and infrastructure in Dane County are an invaluable resource. Trees provide many social, environmental, economic, and health benefits that are vital to the wellbeing of Dane County residents. The tree canopy in our Dane County communities is a critical resource for climate change mitigation and resilience. Healthy and properly maintained trees are one of the rare types of infrastructure that increases in value as it ages, as larger trees provide many times the benefits of smaller trees. Dane County's existing tree canopy has been declining. Physical damage, development, insects, disease and poor maintenance can increase liability and are the primary drivers of canopy loss.

Trees are not solely the purview of the Dane County Parks or Land and Water Resources Departments. Most Dane County departments interact with trees either directly or indirectly—whether it be through the infrastructure development and maintenance work carried out by Dane County's Departments of Public Works and Highway, or the public health heat resilience policies and practices implemented by Dane County Emergency Management and Public Health Madison Dane County. Therefore, it is important for all Dane County employees to be aware of how their decisions and operations affect this valued resource.

By collaborating with in-house staff with forestry expertise and consulting industry experts, Dane County government can work to optimize its use of tree care industry Best Management Practices for preserving, maintaining, and growing Dane County's tree canopy, while also meeting important county and departmental goals.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Dane County Board recognizes the important role trees play in Dane County's infrastructure, including stormwater mitigation, erosion control, minimizing sediment runoff, and stabilizing slopes, and acknowledges the inherent value and numerous benefits of a healthy and well-stewarded tree canopy.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Dane County Board recognizes its responsibility to care for and grow our tree canopy for current and future generations of county residents to preserve not only the county's natural beauty, but to maintain and optimize the numerous invaluable benefits a healthy tree canopy provides to all.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Dane County Board supports the growth and preservation of a healthy forest and tree canopy ecosystem and infrastructure by establishing a framework for collaboration between Dane County government departments to facilitate exchange of resources and establish shared goals for forestry management.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Dane County Board supports protecting tree canopy and tree preservation through the creation of an Interdepartmental Tree Working Group via which Dane County departments will use current International Society of Arboriculture Best Management Practices and, where appropriate, Dane County's Forestry Operations Plan Specifications Section to guide Dane County's projects and contracts that impact Dane County's tree canopy infrastructure.