



Municipal Technical Advisory Service  
INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

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## Environmental & Economic Benefits

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Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the MTAS website ([mtas.tennessee.edu](https://www.mtas.tennessee.edu)). This website is maintained daily by MTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee municipal government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with municipal government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other MTAS website material.

Sincerely,

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## Table of Contents

Environmental & Economic Benefits.....	3
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## Environmental & Economic Benefits

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### **Urban Forestry Benefits — Environment:**

- Trees improve air quality by trapping and holding dust particles that can damage lungs. Tree leaves absorb carbon dioxide and other poisonous gases and, in turn, replenish the atmosphere with oxygen for us to breathe. One acre of trees provides oxygen for 18 people and will absorb the amount of carbon dioxide each year equivalent to that produced by a car driven 26,000 miles. Trees act as a carbon sink by removing the carbon from CO<sub>2</sub> and storing it as cellulose in the trunk.
- Trees reduce noise pollution by absorbing unpleasant sounds from the urban environment.
- Trees improve water quality by mitigating the impact of raindrops resulting in less surface runoff of water from storms and reduced soil erosion. This allows more recharging of the ground water supply, which is significantly reduced by paving. Wooded areas help prevent the transport of sediment and chemicals into streams.
- Trees reduce wind erosion of soil by providing a shield from heavy winds.
- Trees create wildlife diversity by providing a local ecosystem. Trees provide a suitable habitat for animals and birds that would otherwise be absent from urban areas.

### **Urban Forestry Benefits — Economy:**

- Trees create a favorable first impression of a community to visitors.
- Trees enhance community economic stability by attracting businesses and tourists.
- People spend more because they tend to linger and shop along tree-lined streets.
- Trees make better employees. When businesses lease office space in wooded developments they find that their workers are more productive and absenteeism is reduced.
- Higher occupancy rates are found in apartments and offices in wooded areas, and tenants stay longer.
- Higher property values result from well landscaped properties that are more desirable. Studies have shown that property value can increase by 15 percent. Larger specimens equal higher values.

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