



FACT SHEET

Northeast Ohio Needs Trees

Despite increased action to plant and care for trees over the past five years, our tree cover in Northeast Ohio continues to decline. Due to a combination of factors including pests and diseases, climate change, and human activity, we are losing trees at an alarming rate—more than one percent of tree cover each year. Together, we must plant and protect tens of thousands of trees to reverse the trends of tree loss in Northeast Ohio. (Sources: Cuyahoga County Planning Commission and the Cleveland Tree Plan 2020 Tree Canopy Progress Report.)

Trees provide numerous benefits to people and the environment. They cool our air, filter our water, improve our health, bolster businesses, and add value to properties. Tree canopy is essential to the health and well-being of individuals and the community-- it is truly green *infrastructure*.

Yet not all neighborhoods equally benefit from trees. Tree canopy is uneven across our region, tending to be lowest in marginalized communities, including communities of color. These same communities are at greatest risk for the future negative effects of climate change. Because of the many benefits that trees provide, planting and caring for trees is an important way that we can take action to help reduce health and social inequalities now and in the future. The scope of the need to plant and protect trees in Northeast Ohio is big enough that no one entity can do it alone. This effort will require diverse partners including residents, businesses, institutions, and governments. Private landowner engagement is crucial; 85% of forested land is privately owned in Ohio.

This is why Holden Forests & Gardens is announcing our new campaign, *People for Trees*, to address the need to preserve and expand tree canopy in communities across Northeast Ohio.

Holden Forests & Gardens' *People for Trees* Campaign

Holden Forests & Gardens' *People for Trees* invites you - our members, visitors, partners, and local communities across Northeast Ohio - to join in a regional effort to plant and care for trees where you live and work, beginning with making a pledge.

The goal of the *People for Trees* Campaign is to work together to plant and care for at least 15,000 trees throughout Northeast Ohio by 2025.

How You Can Become *People for Trees*

For Residents

- Make a pledge to plant and care for trees on your property at www.holdenfg.org/people-for-trees.
- Once you pledge to plant a tree, you will receive an easy-to-follow Tree Selection Guide, a Tree Care Toolkit, and other helpful information and inspiration to help you become a good steward of your new tree. Pledgers will receive ongoing communications about tree care, invitations to free virtual classes, and more.
- Share your pledge on social media using the hashtag #MytreeinCLE.

For Institutional Partners

- Make a pledge to plant and care for trees on your property at www.holdenfg.org/people-for-trees.
- Our experts at Holden Forests & Gardens can help you choose tree species that are right for your needs and connect you with industry standards for proper planting and maintenance.
- If you are an institution that works with communities of color and/or in areas with low existing tree canopy, we may be able to provide additional support for your tree projects. Get in touch with Sandra Albro at salbro@holdenfg.org about partnership opportunities through *People For Trees*.

For Businesses

- Make a pledge to plant and care for trees on your property at www.holdenfg.org/people-for-trees.
- Our experts at Holden Forests & Gardens can help you choose tree species that are right for your needs and connect you with industry standards for proper planting and maintenance.
- Get the word out about your *People for Trees* story to your constituents! Our marketing team can help tell your story.

Essential Benefits of Trees

Did you know that trees provide numerous benefits, extending beyond property lines to improve the health and wellbeing of entire neighborhoods? These are just some of the ways that trees are essential for homes, businesses, and communities:

- Trees improve public health by providing oxygen, filtering the air, and reducing stress, which have been linked to reductions in asthma and heart disease.
- Trees calm traffic and cool sidewalks and streets, making neighborhoods safer and more walkable.
- Trees increase business traffic and home values.
- Trees remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, helping to combat climate change.
- Trees save energy on heating and cooling.
- Trees filter and retain stormwater and prevent soil erosion, which keeps our rivers and Lake Erie cleaner.
- Trees provide habitat for birds and pollinators.

Why Holden Forests & Gardens?

We want to put our 90+ years of expertise in trees and plants to use to improve the health of communities throughout Northeast Ohio. By sharing our technical expertise, advocacy work and policy development, advancing scientific research, providing training and education, and working together to plant and care for trees and native plants, we can help make neighborhoods throughout Northeast Ohio healthier and happier.

Holden Forests & Gardens can build a Northeast Ohio-wide movement through our strong network of community partnerships and family of ambassadors: 380,000 annual visitors in a typical year, nearly 17,000 members, our Board of Directors, more than 1,500 volunteers, 50+ Garden Club affiliates and more than 100,000 social media followers.

Our team consists of: Scientists, arborists, community foresters, horticulturalists, and environmental/nature educators including:

- 59 staff experts
- 350+ volunteers working in research, conservation, community forestry/outreach, collections, horticulture, education

Our demonstration and inspiration sites are located within the 14th largest public garden and arboretum in the United States:

- The Holden Arboretum: 3,500 acres including *Working Woods*, a 62-acre demonstration site for healthy forest management.
- The Cleveland Botanical Garden: 11 acres in the urban center of University Circle.
- Our urban farm sites in Slavic Village and Fairfax neighborhoods.

Our Partnerships

Holden Forests & Gardens looks forward to continuing our service on the Cleveland Tree Coalition and its leadership board. At the same time, we recognize a need to partner beyond Cleveland borders, given the regional scope of tree canopy loss and the footprint of our institution in multiple Northeast Ohio counties.

Additional partnerships include: American Public Gardens Association, The Nature Conservancy, The Ohio Department of National Resources, The United States Forest Service, Community Development Corporations, Libraries, and Colleges and Universities to name a few. (A complete listing appears on the *People for Trees* infographic.)

Holden Forests & Gardens' mission is to connect people with the wonder, beauty, and value of trees and plants, to inspire action for healthy communities. For more information, please contact Margaret Thresher in the Public Relations and Marketing Department at mthresher@holdenfg.org.