

## TreeBaltimore Campaign is Underway!

**TreeBaltimore** is the City's framework that bring to work together all residents, businesses, and institutions to work in unison to double our tree canopy over the next 30 years. TreeBaltimore represent our Mayor Dixon's aggressive push to address the City's environmental challenges, and to take matters into our hands by becoming stewards of our natural resources. But why should we care about our trees? Trees are a miracle of life! They clean water and air; they keep us cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter; and more importantly they help lessen the impacts of global warming. Trees are essential to healthy, vibrant communities. Implementation of **TreeBaltimore** is a monumental investment in our City's and our children's future.



### What is a tree canopy?

A tree canopy is the percent of a city's land area that has tree cover. If you were in a helicopter and were looking down at a city from a bird's eye view, the tree canopy is the amount of land covered by leaves and branches.

Our forests have changed dramatically since European settlers arrived in the 17th century, when Maryland was virtually covered by large, ancient forests. The early settlers viewed trees as an impediment to farming. Forests were first cleared for farming of tobacco and wheat, and for building materials, and later to produce charcoal to drive the iron works of Baltimore's growing industry. By the late 1800s, 60-80% of the forests in the Chesapeake Bay watershed had been cleared.



Today, Baltimore's Urban Forest includes all of the trees and shrubs growing on both public and private property within the city. The tree in front of your house or apartment is working for you every minute of the day! The main difference between an Urban Forest and a natural forest is contact with people. Trees are even more valuable in urban areas due to the benefits they provide to Baltimore's 640,000 residents and visitors, who live very closely to each other.

Recognizing the importance of the Urban Forest, Baltimore City adopted a Tree Canopy Goal of 40% coverage within a 30-year timeframe, doubling the City's existing 20% tree canopy coverage. This is a very aggressive goal that will require the active support and participation of Baltimore's citizens, businesses and institutions. Given that the majority of land in Baltimore is privately owned, most of the new trees will need to be planted on private property.

### **Making the Vision a Reality**

Imagine a city with cool, shaded streets and sidewalks, clean streams flowing to a clean harbor, and beautiful stands of trees teeming with songbirds. Imagine staying cool on a summer day under the shade of majestic oak trees and listening to the rustling of leaves instead of the hum of air conditioners. Imagine a city where children breathe clean air and few suffer the effects of asthma. A sustainable Urban Forest plays an important role in making this vision a reality. And we are going to accomplish this here in Baltimore through a multi-tiered program.



In December, 2008, Mayor Sheila Dixon joined Senator Catherine E. Pugh, Councilwoman Sharon Middleton, members of the community, and Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks to unveil the new **TreeBaltimore** Action Plan and to celebrate the newly formed private-public partnership with Sinai Hospital. To commemorate this award-winning effort, a ceremonial tree was planted on the grounds of Sinai Hospital.

As the first institution to partner with the **TreeBaltimore** program, Sinai Hospital has agreed to match the city's 30 street trees along Cylburn and Lanier avenues with planting 30 additional trees on the hospital's property. In addition to tree planting, Sinai Hospital also has agreed to do the initial maintenance of the trees planted by Baltimore City.

Other examples of activities leading up to the **TreeBaltimore** Action Plan have included:

- **TreeBaltimore** is offering homeowners comprehensive education about the importance of planting trees and is providing a cash incentive, the \$10 Growing Home Tree coupon. This program helps to encourage planting trees on private residential land.
- This unique partnership with Baltimore County and other jurisdictions, local retail nurseries and garden centers, and homeowners is an important component of **TreeBaltimore**;
- Hosting two bi-annual free tree giveaways per year (Arbor Day and Fall) since 2007;
- Planted and distributed 7,844 trees since the 2007 fall planting season;
- Organizing a new Baltimore Tree Trust, which will serve as a fundraising and marketing umbrella for the city's tree planting initiatives; and
- Hosted the first TreeSummit, in December, at the Baltimore Rowing and Resources Center in Middle Branch Park.

It is by working together that we will accomplish the goal of increasing the tree canopy and making Baltimore a beautiful and sustainable City!



For more information and to keep up to date with **TreeBaltimore Campaign** activities go to <http://www.baltimorecity.gov/government/recnparks/treeBaltimore.php>