

FORESTRY MANAGEMENT IN LITTLETON

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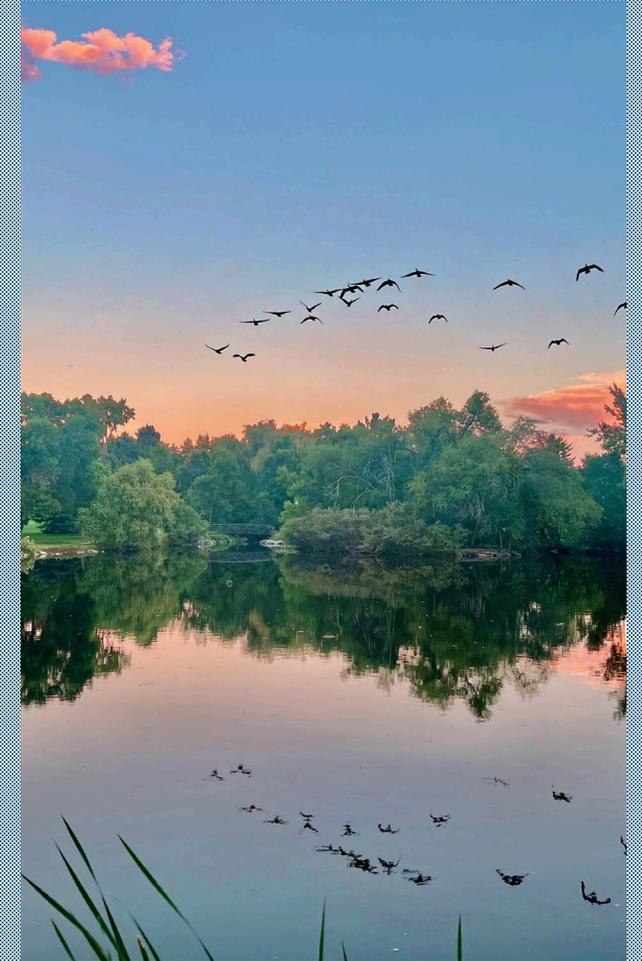
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SEPTEMBER 22, 2025



AGENDA

- Introduction
- Background of Forestry Management
- Benefits of Urban Trees
- Proposed Code Amendments
 - Costs/ In-lieu fee
 - Canopy Coverage
- Case Studies
 - Littleton Blvd/ Main (built out)
 - Affordable Housing
- Questions



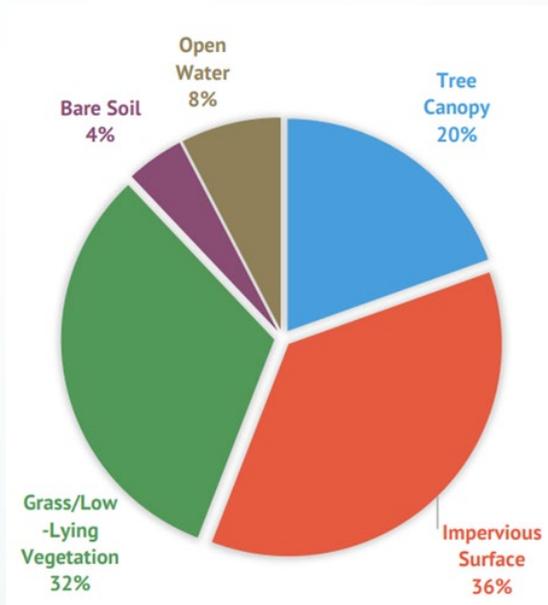
FORESTRY MANAGEMENT:

collect data > identify pitfalls > set goals > implement code



- **2022:** Citywide tree inventory and tree risk assessment
 - Lack of species diversity
 - 46% of trees needed prompt hazard mitigation (pruning or removing)

- **2022:** Contracted an Urban Tree Canopy Assessment (UTC)
 - Canopy coverage **loss** (Only 20% at the time)



- **2023:** City adopted first ever [forestry management plan](#)
 - Adopted: 50% canopy goal increase by 2090

- **2023:** Forestry hired a consulting firm to review code and provide industry standard recommendations to achieve Council’s goals

	Year	Tree Canopy Percent	Notes
Current	2023	20%	
Short- term goals	2030	20%	Given our risk assessment results (7% of city-maintained trees recommended for removal) and EAB approaching (~14% of the city’s overall canopy) we will work to stabilize and maintain our current state
Medium- term goals	2040	25%	Hope to sustainably increase canopy cover by ~5% every 10 years. UTC reporting recommended
	2050	30%	
	2060	35%	
Long- term goals	2090	50%	Should have reached 50% total canopy goal. Maintain moving forward



FORESTRY MANAGEMENT: CHALLENGES

- **EAB-**

- potentially loss of 14% of urban canopy (total is only 20%)

- **Highline Canal-**

- aging trees, lack of irrigation, monoculture

- **Declining canopy-**

- years of deferred maintenance and lack of standards around current trees

*Reminder :
Littleton's urban tree canopy
goal is 50% coverage, per
the Urban Forestry
Management Plan.*



FORESTRY MANAGEMENT: CODE

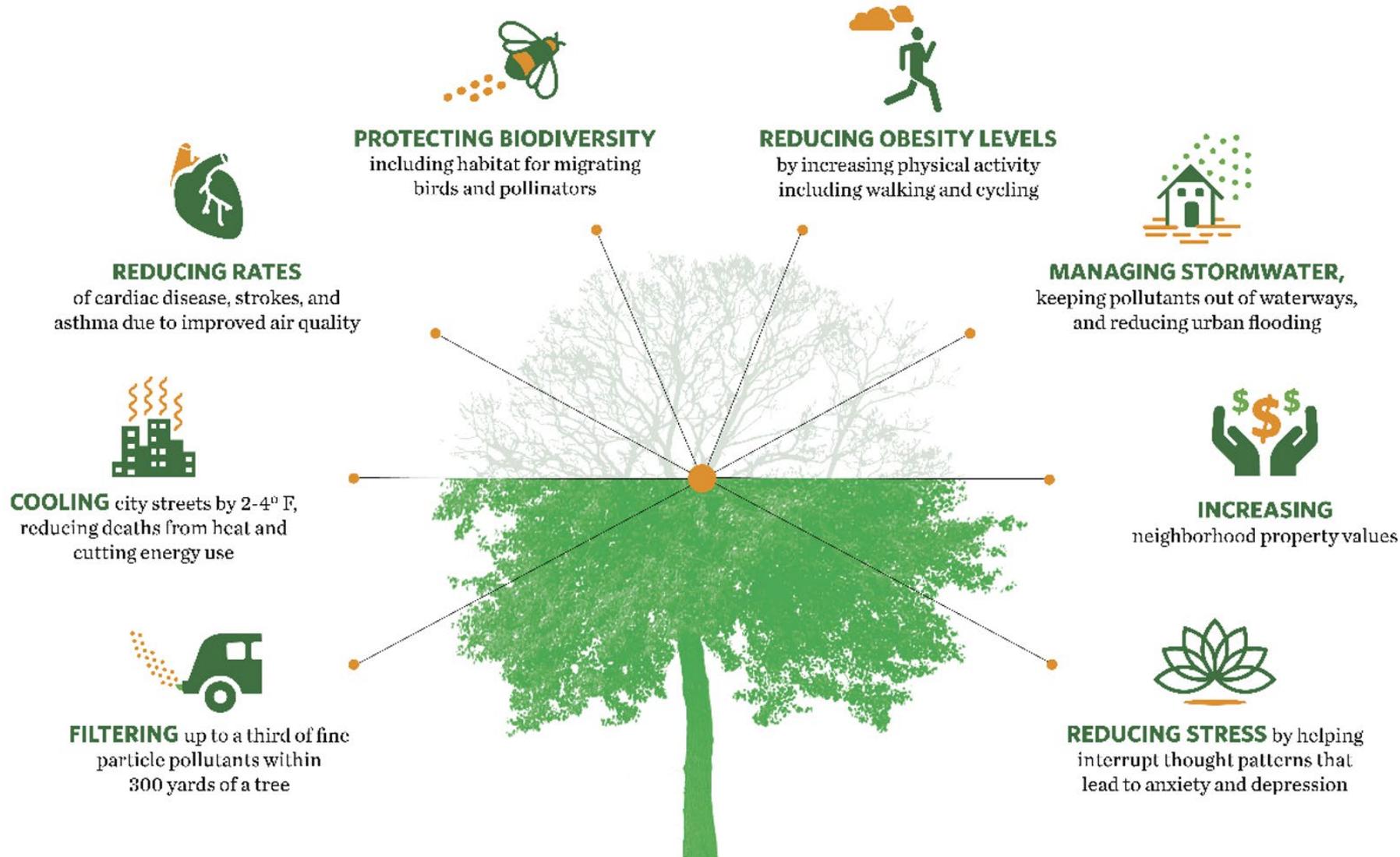
- Code update recommendations aim to enhance the ordinance's effectiveness, promote best practices, provide clarity, and align with Littleton's goals for canopy preservation.
- Amending the current ordinance to better align with industry standards and community needs can help to achieve successful and sustainable management.
- **The Tree Manual** serves as industry standard Best Management Practices guiding document to be referenced in 8-4 and 10-1-3 to provide property owners, contractors and city staff with comprehensive guidance.





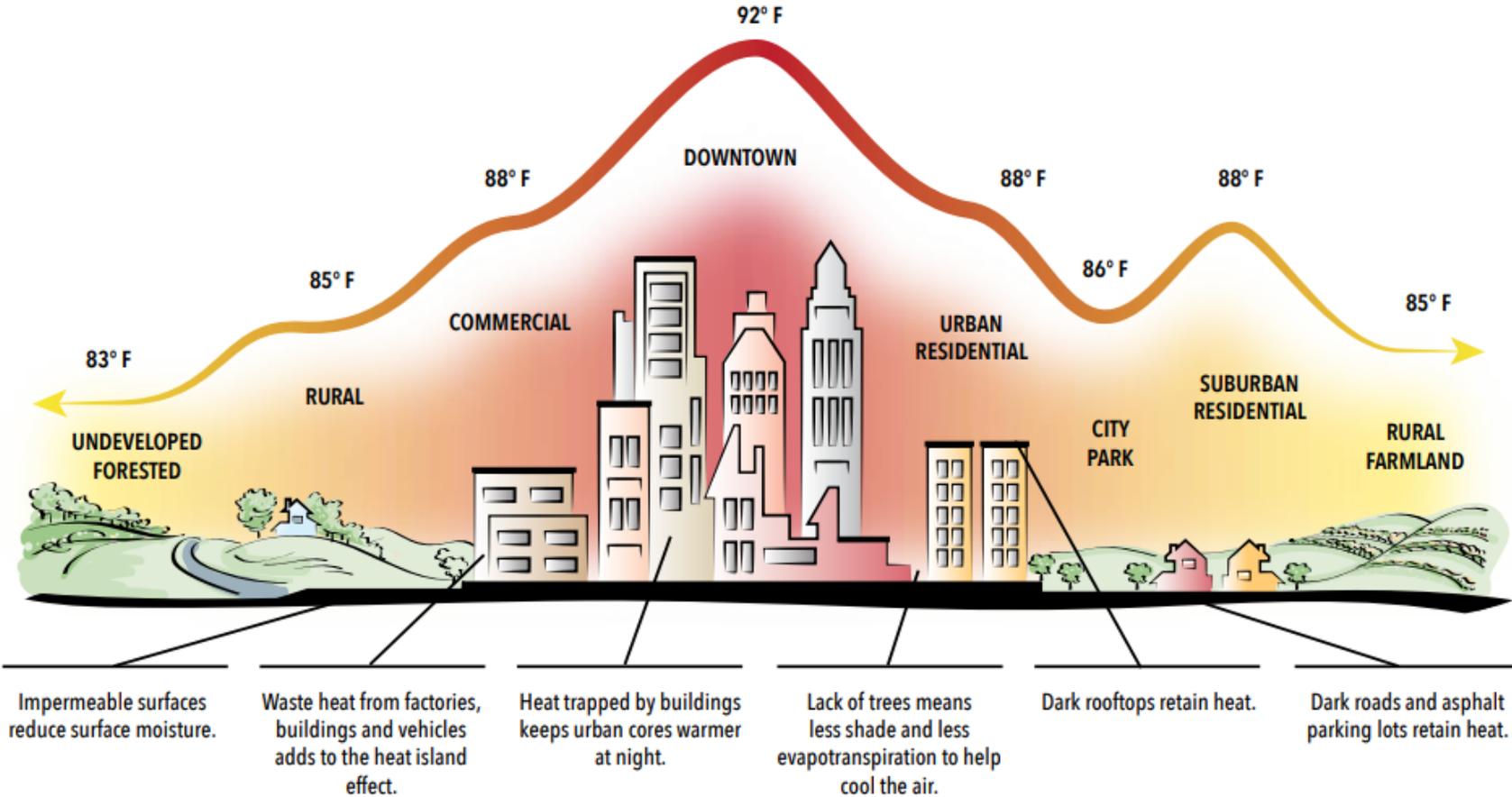
Benefits of Urban Trees

Research has linked the presence of urban trees to...

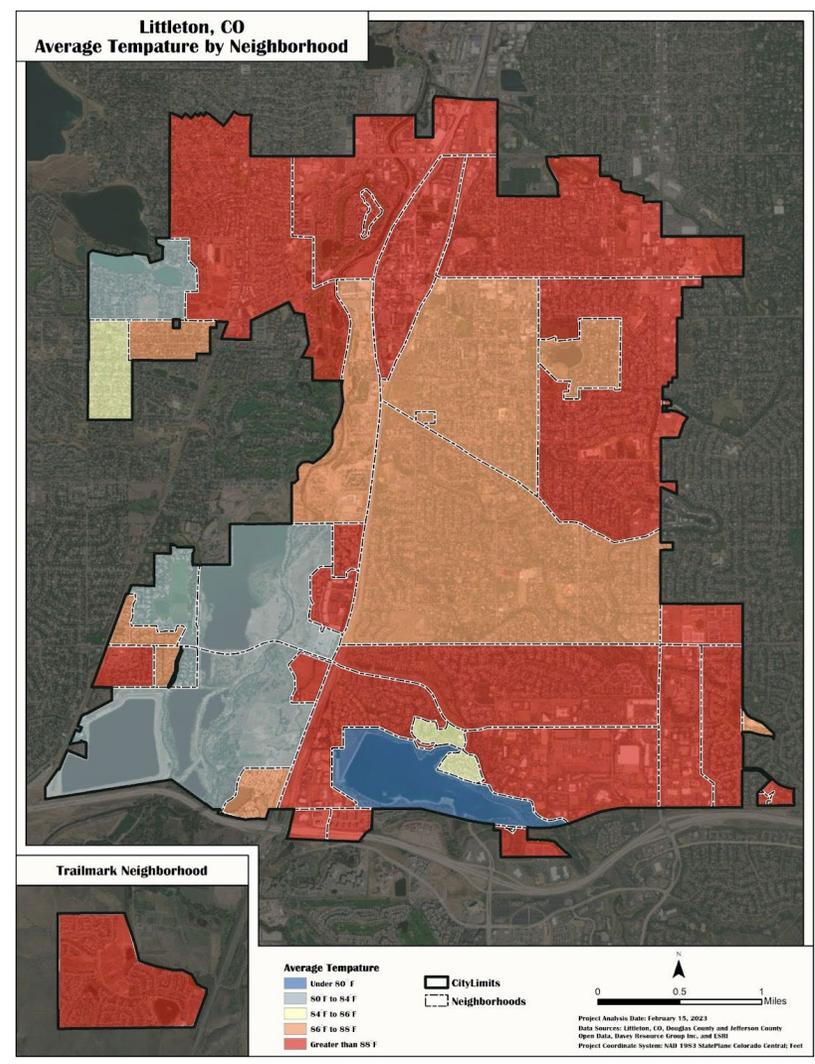
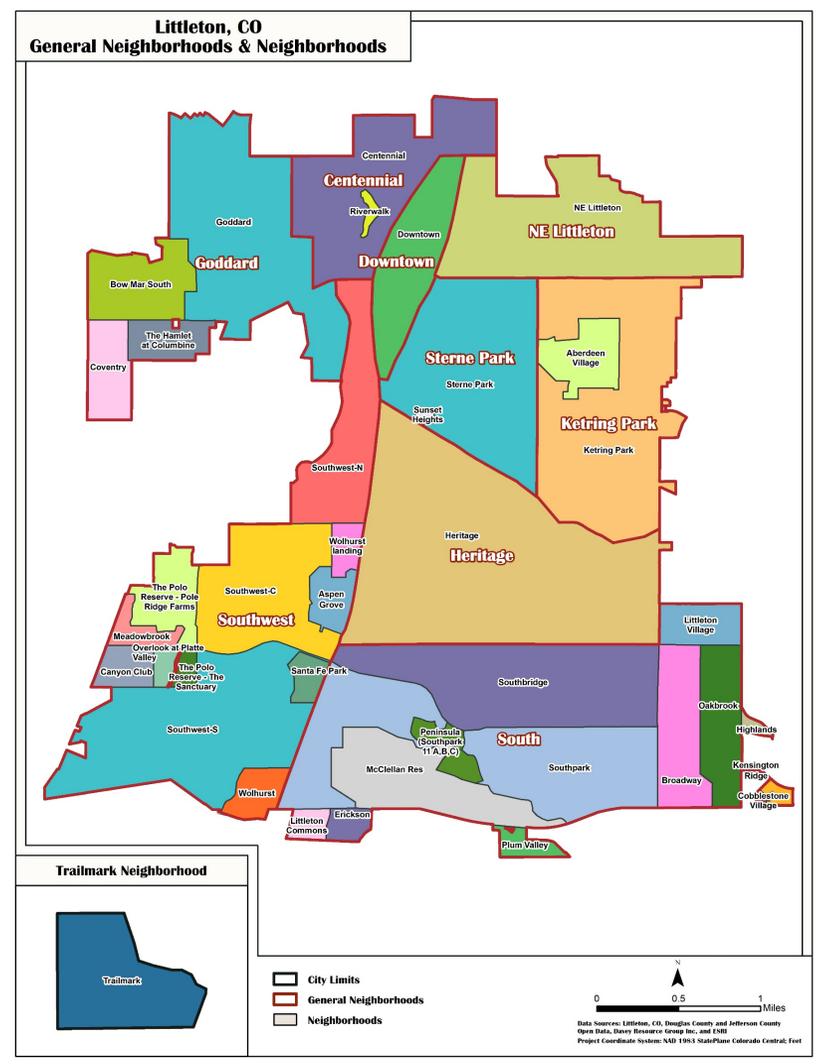


BENEFITS OF URBAN TREES- HEAT

URBAN HEAT ISLAND EFFECT - LATE AFTERNOON TEMPERATURES



BENEFITS OF URBAN TREES- HEAT





ECONOMICS OF URBAN FORESTRY IN COLORADO

Trees have a tremendous impact on local economies and our quality-of-life.
Here's a peek at how urban trees in your state are contributing.



9,738 people are employed as a result of urban forestry activities in Colorado.



Communities in Colorado enrolled in Tree City USA® invested an average of **\$7.84 per resident** for tree planting and care compared to **\$3.00 per resident** in non-participating communities nationally.



Urban trees in the state contribute **\$967 million** in community-wide environmental benefits each year, such as carbon sequestration, air pollution removal, and avoided stormwater runoff.



The urban forestry sector in Colorado has an annual sales and employment footprint worth **\$1.3 billion**.



Tree cover at private homes adds **\$365 million** annually to property values across Colorado.

BENEFITS OF URBAN TREES- ECONOMIC

- The UTC found that Littleton has 19.5% tree cover that provides \$11 million in benefits to the community.
- Good for Business
 - Attract customers, lower utility costs, cool parking spaces, increase tourism, customers
- Summer cooling costs
 - One well placed tree can reduce air conditioning costs alone up to 50%
- Winter Savings
 - Windbreaks can save 20%- 50% in energy costs for heating
- Property Values
 - 10%- 20% increased resale values



BENEFITS OF URBAN TREES- ECONOMIC

Littleton's 19.5% tree cover that provides \$11 million in benefits to the community.

ECOSYSTEM BENEFITS	QUANTITY	VALUE
Annual benefits		
Air quality: Carbon Monoxide (CO) removal (lb)	1,714 lbs	\$1,143
Air quality: Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) removal (lb)	29,041 lbs	\$8,048
Air quality: Ozone (O3) removal (lb)	67,556 lbs	\$102,973
Air quality: Sulfur Dioxide (SO2) removal (lb)	3,336 lbs	\$438
Air quality: Particulate Matter (PM10) removal (lb)	39,731 lbs	\$124,526
Carbon sequestration (tons)	1,550 tons	\$264,048
Stormwater: avoided runoff (gal)	18,308,483 gals	\$216,040
TOTAL ANNUAL BENEFITS		\$717,216
Accrued benefits		
Carbon storage (tons)	60,390 tons	\$10,300,306
TOTAL BENEFITS		\$11,017,522



ADDRESSING CONCERNS: FEE COSTS

■ Trail Connectivity Sidewalk Installation

Species	DSH (inches)	Condition	Retained?	Replacement (inches)
Bur Oak	12"	Good	No	12
Blue Spruce	15"	Very Poor	No	0
Honeylocust	12"	Good	No	12
Hawthorne	4"	Fair	No	4
Russian Olive	14"	Good	No	0
Subtotal				28

New Planting	DSH (inches)	Replacement (inches)
Bur Oak (4)	2	8
Blue Spruce (3)	2	6
Hawthorne (3)	2	6
Subtotal		20

8 x 250 = \$2000 due



FEE COSTS- PRIORITIZE TREE RETENTION

■ Trail Connectivity Sidewalk Installation

Species	DSH (inches)	Condition	Retained?	Replacement (inches)
Bur Oak	12"	Good	YES	0
Blue Spruce	15"	Very Poor	No	0
Honeylocust	12"	Good	No	12
Hawthorne	4"	Fair	No	4
Russian Olive	14"	Good	No	0
Subtotal				16

New Planting	DSH (inches)	Replacement (inches)
Bur Oak (4)	2	8
Blue Spruce (3)	2	6
Hawthorne (3)	2	6
Subtotal		20

0\$ due!



CANOPY COVERAGE

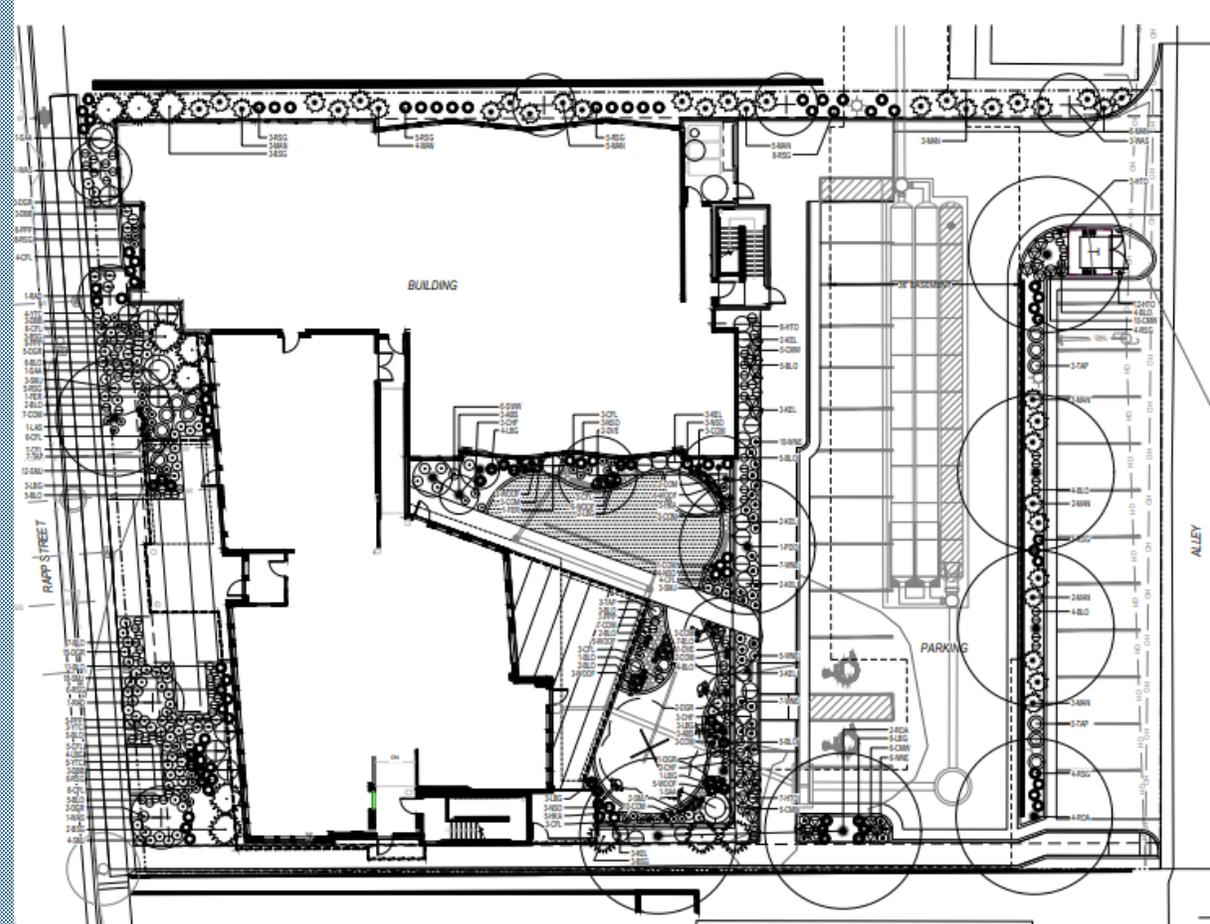
Factor	20% Canopy	30% Canopy
Example Lot 10,890 sq ft	2,178 sq ft	3,267 sq ft.
# Trees Needed	2 large trees	3–4+ trees (mix of sizes)
Diversity	Low – maybe 1–2 species	Higher – mix of shade, ornamental, conifer
Maintenance	Fewer trees = lower pruning/watering costs	More trees = more maintenance but greater benefits
Resilience	If 1 tree dies, coverage drops significantly	Loss of one tree doesn't wipe out canopy target
Ecosystem Benefits	Moderate stormwater capture, shade, carbon storage	Greater shade, stormwater uptake, habitat, air quality
Yard Use	More open turf/recreation space	Less open turf, more shaded microclimates
Long-Term Growth	Easy to maintain spacing	Careful siting needed to prevent overcrowding

30% canopy requires more intentional planting, but results in a healthier, more resilient, and cooler site with added seasonal interest.

CASE STUDIES

Montview Flats - SMHO

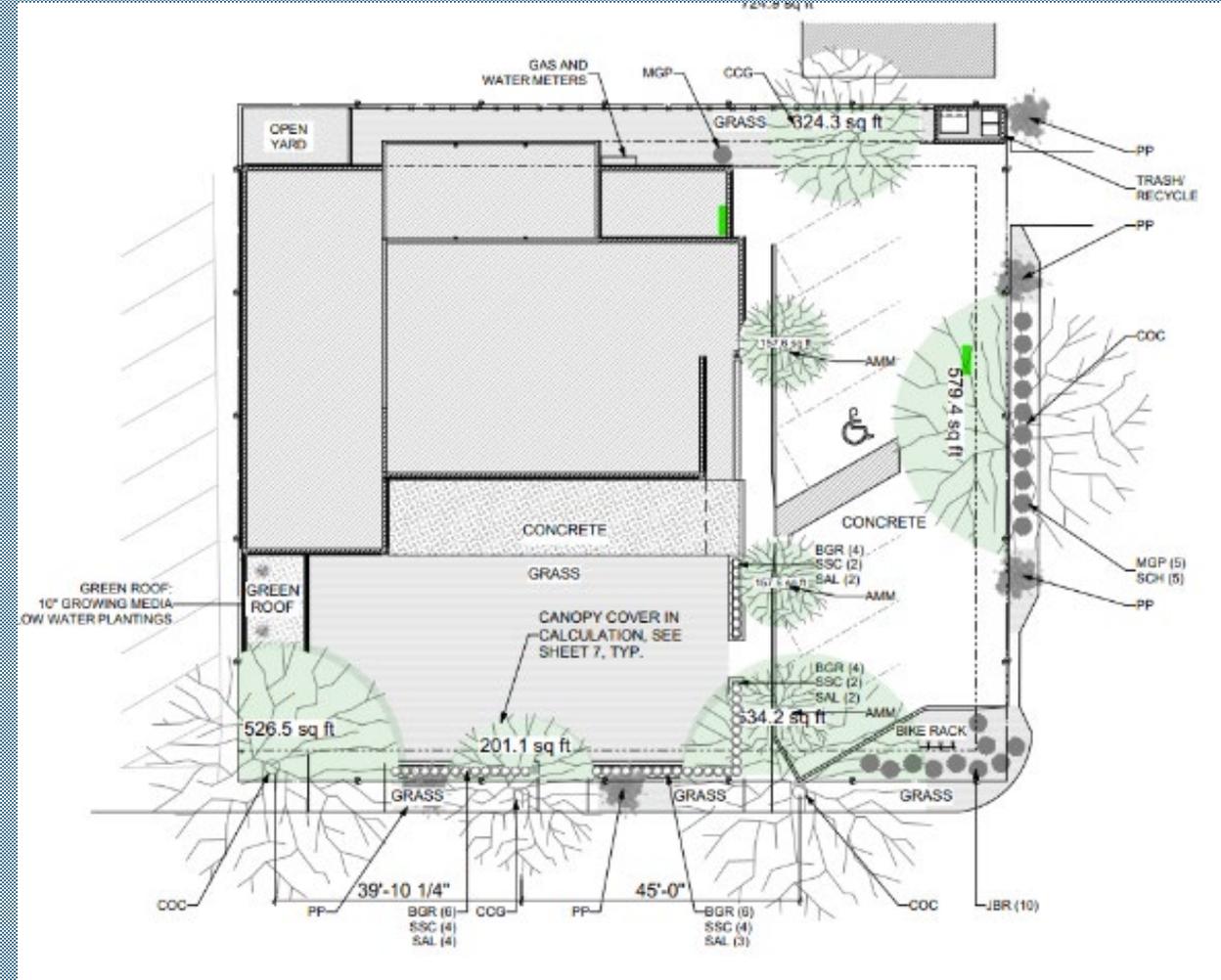
- Lot size: 30,046 SF (2/3 acre)
- Canopy Coverage: 6492 SF (22%)
- Total trees planted: 23
 - Large shade trees: 7



CASE STUDIES

Littleton Brewing Co

- Lot size: 13,666 SF (1/3 acre)
- Canopy Coverage: 2,580 SF (19%)
- Total trees planted: 13
 - Large shade trees: 3



PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- **CANOPY LOSS FEE RATE**

- No longer \$500 per replacement tree but a proposed increase to \$250 per inch per replacement tree

- **TREE CANOPY COVERAGE INCREASE**

Subsec. 10-1-3.6.E Tree Canopy Coverage Requirements

A. Applicability. The standards of this Subsection apply to the MFR, NC, CM, and BC districts.

B. Minimum Standards. The tree canopy coverage requirements for the applicable districts are set out in Table 10-1-3.6.E, *Canopy Coverage Requirements*.

Table 10-1-3.6.E Canopy Coverage Requirements	
Zoning District	Minimum Tree Canopy Coverage
MFR, Multi-Family Residential	20 30%
NC, Neighborhood Commercial	15 20%
CM, Corridor Mixed	15 20%
BC, Business Commercial	10 20%

Table Notes:
1. The minimum canopy coverage requirements are based on gross lot area.



MOVING FORWARD

- Finalize Title 8
- Finalize The Tree Manual
- Determine where Forestry enforcement is best housed

Littleton cannot afford NOT to protect their current canopy



MOTION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval of Resolution 10-2025 to the City Council

QUESTIONS

