



Join us in keeping Boston cool

Boston just went through its hottest June on record. After a year of pandemic, we have perhaps become immune to just how dangerous heat can be. By some estimates, heat kills 5,600 Americans annually. **And just like the pandemic, the distribution of the effects of heat are inequitable, having a deeper impact on the health of people of color and residents of low income neighborhoods.** Just this week, a study showed Boston ranked as #6 in the nation for "Heat Intensity" - the difference between hot and cool neighborhoods.

Part of this story is written in the concrete of America's cities: tree-lined city streets can be up to 10 degrees cooler than their neighboring tree deserts. **This issue of Tree Equity can be traced back nearly a century to redlining and it is an environmental justice issue that will only get worse as our planet continues to warm.**

We're stepping up to ensure that every Boston resident deserves the benefit of a tree. Today, I'm asking you to join us in this mission.

Over the past several weeks much has been written about the important role that urban trees will play in keeping cities cool, as well as their inequitable distribution. Last week the New York Times ran two stories about trees - [What Technology Could Reduce Heat Deaths?](#) [Trees](#) and [Since When Have Trees Existed Only for Rich Americans?](#) - and David Abel from

the Boston Globe explored heat island in Hyde Park ([Boston's 'heat islands' turn lower-income neighborhoods from hot to insufferable](#)).

Study Ranks Boston 6th In Country For Heat Intensity, Tied With Chicago And Miami

Boston

Median income: \$50K



Median income: \$190K



What Technology Could Reduce Heat Deaths? Trees.

At a time when climate change is making heat waves more frequent and more intense, trees are stationary superheroes. They can lower urban temperatures 10 life-saving degrees, scientists say.

Boston's 'heat islands' turn lower-income neighborhoods from hot to insufferable



It's heartening to see urban trees receiving the recognition they deserve: they cool our air, remove pollutants, reduce stormwater runoff, and improve mental health, especially in times of isolation.

Political leaders across the city, the state, and the nation have taken notice and are standing for the trees.

- Boston, for example, is embarking on a year-long \$500,000 Urban Forest planning process to guide its work for the next two decades.
- At the state level, Sen. Creem and Rep. Ehrlich introduced The Municipal Reforestation Program ([H.904](#), [S.504](#)).
- At the federal level, Congress has introduced a suite of bills, including the [TREE Act](#), the [SHADE Act](#), and the [Trillion Trees Act](#); the infrastructure bill promises to bring additional resources to the table. These efforts are in large part guided by a commitment to environmental justice through the lens of Tree Equity.

Yet, as promising as these developments are, **these plans will only succeed if there is deep engagement, education, and programming at the grassroots level that goes beyond just planting more trees. If we just see trees, we'll miss the forest.**

At this moment, through trees, **we have an opportunity to reform the very roots of our society: to build community, to share stories, and to bring people together in a way that reimagine our culture and our relationships to the planet and to each other.**

Increased funding for tree planting and care is critical, but we also need to create programs to encourage residents to plant trees in their private yards, we need to implement policies that preserve mature trees from development, we need to teach residents how to care for public and provide trees, and we need to provide training for a new generation of tree care professionals.

It is high time that we all together - residents, political leaders, corporations, institutions, schools, hospitals - roll up our sleeves and commit to an urban forest that promotes our shared values of mutual care and empathy. **Trees care for us, and it is high time that we care for them.**

Will you join us in our efforts? This summer, please consider a donation to help keep us all cool.

Gratefully,

David

PS - Our board has stepped up - the first \$3,000 will be matched dollar for dollar. Double your gift today.



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