

Outcome

Continually increase urban tree canopy to provide air quality, water quality and habitat benefits throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Expand urban tree canopy by 2,400 acres by 2025.

Status

While 8,300 acres of trees were planted throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed between 2014 and 2021, over 25,000 acres of tree canopy in urban and community areas were lost between 2013-14 and 2017-18. Much effort is needed to reverse the trend of net losses and achieve the net gain specified in the outcome. The [Tree Canopy Outcome](#) is off course and will not be met by 2025.

What has helped achieve success since 2014?

- The development and release of [high-resolution land use/land cover change data](#) for the period 2013-2014 to 2017-2018 to more accurately track tree canopy gain and loss.
- In the past two years, urban tree canopy has gained national and global attention as a key arena for building equity and climate resilience in communities.
- Vital state and local programs in place to assist with tree plantings and management.

What challenges have hindered progress?

- The need to develop or strengthen new local and state policies that help conserve and maintain canopy where possible.
- Addressing tree inequity will require substantial resource investments in community-based solutions, robust and inclusive community engagement efforts, and deliberate policy/program/funding adjustments to ensure these communities receive first priority in financial and technical assistance.
- Constraints with nursery supply to ensure the quality and quantity of tree stock will be available to meet ambitious tree planting goals.
- The need to fund, train and maintain a robust, well-trained workforce to meet scaled-up tree planting and maintenance needs.
- The lack of capacity and investment in programs varies widely across the watershed.

If on course, what is needed to continue current trajectory? If off course, what is needed to accelerate progress? If uncertain, what would need to be done before 2025 to classify as on course/off course and can this be done in that timeframe?

- *Implement CBP and jurisdiction Action Plans developed based on the 2023 Chesapeake Tree Canopy Funding & Policy Roundtable recommendations (will be complete summer 2023)*
- *Incorporate strong credits and incentives for forest and tree conservation/maintenance actions in the next (post-2025) TMDL framework (in addition to planting)*
- *Invest in coordinated tree canopy workforce and nursery supply pathways to scale up implementation, with DEIJ as the central focus*
- *Expand tree canopy communication, outreach and training resources to help build local support for tree conservation, maintenance and planting*