



**CHICAGO  
REGION  
TREES  
INITIATIVE**

Our Trees.  
Our Communities.  
Our Future.

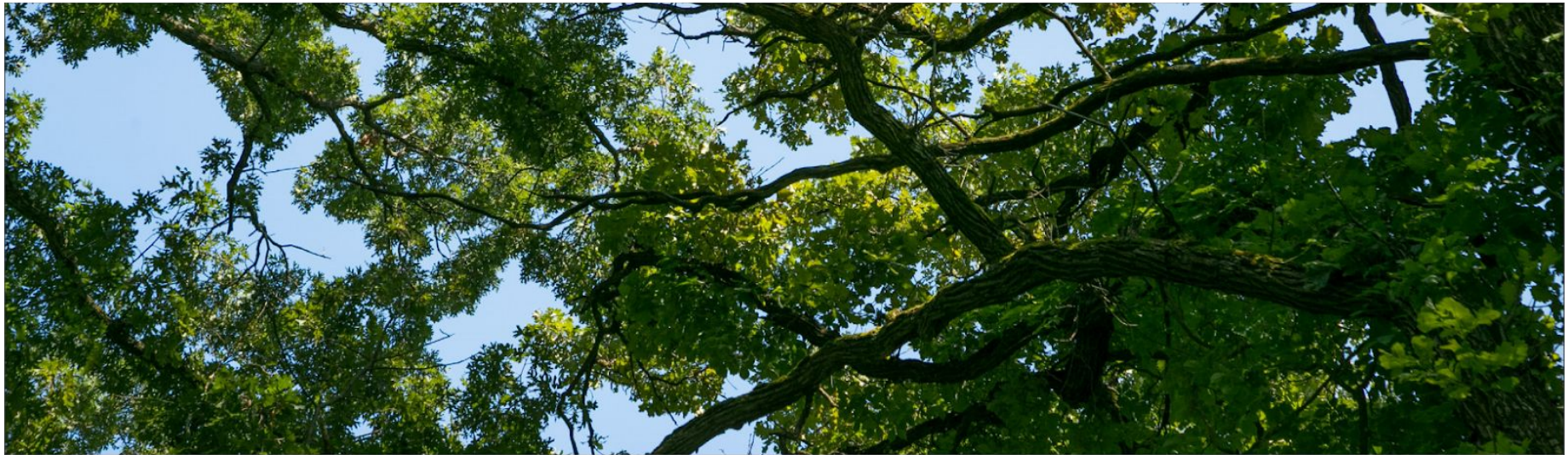
**Tree Industry Innovations  
through Contract Growing**  
Urban Tree Supply Forum August 6, 2024

Trinity Pierce, CRTI Senior Stewardship Manager  
[tpierce@mortonarb.org](mailto:tpierce@mortonarb.org)  
The Morton Arboretum



# Topics to Cover

- CRTI overview
- Urban canopy data
- Nursery pipeline - containerized trees
- Contract growing programs





**Our Trees.  
Our Communities.  
Our Future.**

Create a tree canopy that is more diverse, more abundant, and more equitably distributed to provide needed benefits to all people and communities.

# CRTI Goals



**INSPIRE PEOPLE  
TO VALUE TREES**

**INCREASE THE CHICAGO  
REGION'S TREE CANOPY**

- Improved tree health
- Improved urban forest policy
- Increased funding for urban forestry
- Integration of science

**ENHANCE OAK  
ECOSYSTEMS**

**REDUCE THREATS  
TO TREES**



- Tree Canopy**
- Surface Temperature
- Flood Risk
- Air Pollutants
- Asthma Rates
- Vulnerable Populations
- Priority Areas

[View Combined Map](#)

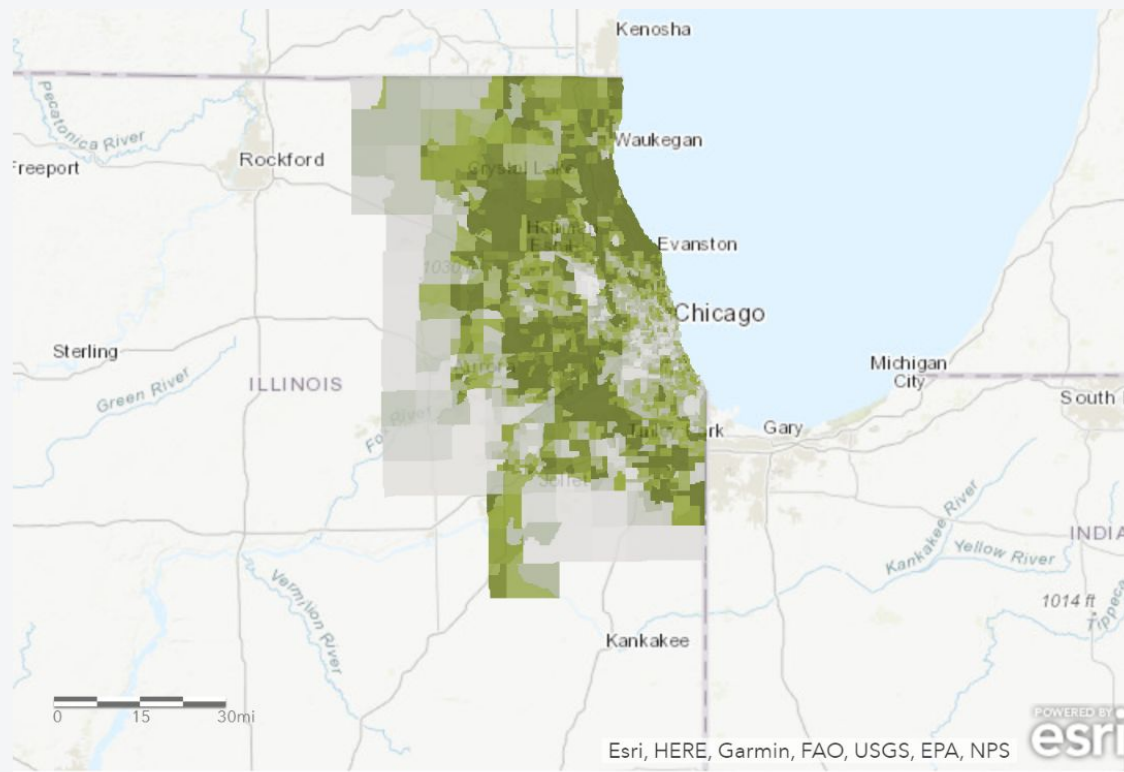
# Tree Canopy

Trees in the Chicago region are not distributed evenly or equitably. The Chicago region has 23% canopy cover, far below the national average.

This map shows the percentage of canopy for each census tract. Tree canopy data comes from a LiDAR-based analysis that can identify trees with less than a four-square-foot canopy.

UP NEXT

[Surface Temperature](#)



Canopy cover

- Very High
- High
- Medium
- Low
- Very Low

Find address or place

### Priority area: North Lawndale\_Chicago



Priority score	highest
Percent canopy	15.64
Mean temperature	82.97
Flood risk	9.51
Vulnerability	highest
Air pollution score	high
Asthma	highest

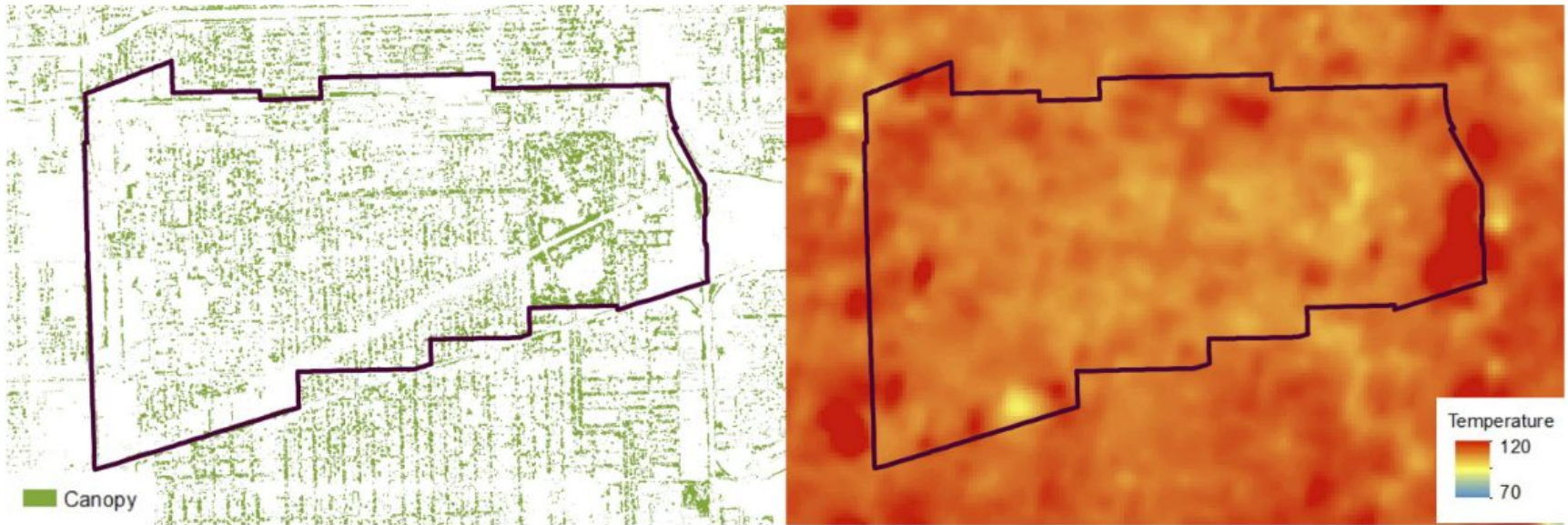
2 km  
2 mi

City of Chicago, Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, NGA, EPA, USDA, NPS

# Urban Canopy Summary - North Lawndale



Urban green cover and heat island maps



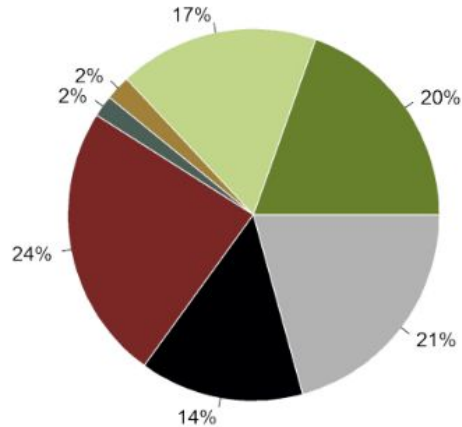
CRTI Urban Tree Canopy Summary: North Lawndale Chicago



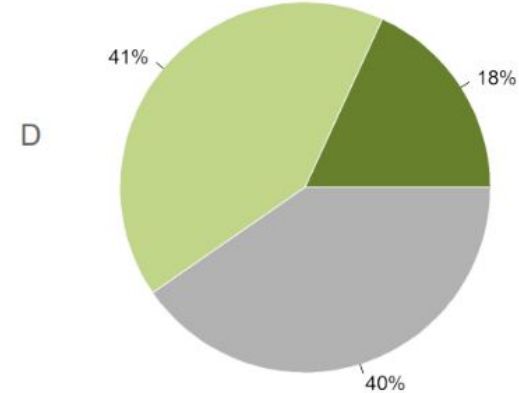
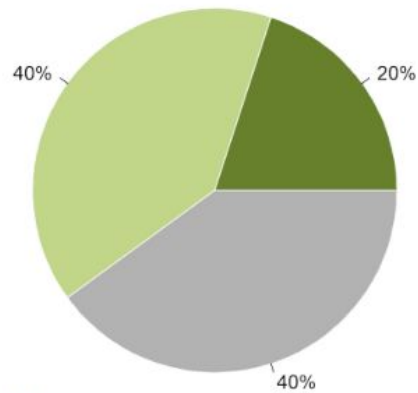
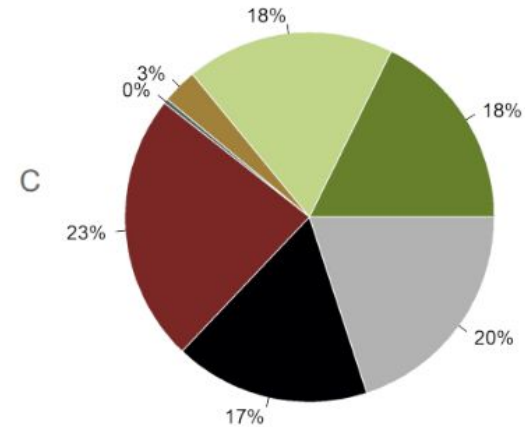
# Urban Canopy Summary - North Lawndale

Land cover distribution and plantable space

City of Chicago



North Lawndale



North Lawndale and City of Chicago Canopy CRTI Urban Tree Canopy Summary



# Urban & Community Forestry Engagement

Community-based outreach and goal alignment





Resilience Corridor, North Lawndale Chicago

# Urban & Community Forestry Nursery Pipeline

## Containerized trees

- Ideal for volunteer plantings, foster community engagement
- Less transplant shock, root ball intact
- But remain small percentage of industry

## Opportunity to expand production

- Anticipate growing demand
- Solicit grower feedback
- Design contract growing program

Resilience Corridor, North Lawndale Chicago



**African Heritage Garden, North Lawndale Chicago**

# Tree Industry Roundtable Workshops

Invited nursery, landscaping, and planning representatives

- Reviewed production, planting and care, and workforce development
- Explored feasibility of contract growing
- Productive space for different industry professionals to connect and strategize

African Heritage Garden, North Lawndale Chicago



# Contract Growing - Containerized Trees

	2016	2016	2017	2017	2018	2018	2019	2019	2020	2020	2021	2021
Annual Allocation	Planting \$ Reduced to	2016 - 2020 Contract	Planting \$ Reduced to	2017 - 2021 Contract	Planting \$ Reduced to	2018 - 2022 Contract	Planting \$ Reduced to	2019 - 2023 Contract	Whole	2020 - 2024 Contract	Whole	2021 - 2025 Contract
\$10,000	<b>\$8,000</b>	\$2,000										
\$10,000		\$2,000	<b>\$6,000</b>	\$2,000								
\$10,000		\$2,000		\$2,000	<b>\$4,000</b>	\$2,000						
\$10,000		\$2,000		\$2,000		\$2,000	<b>\$2,000</b>	\$2,000				
\$10,000		\$2,000		\$2,000		\$2,000		\$2,000	<b>Whole</b>	\$2,000		
\$10,000				\$2,000		\$2,000		\$2,000		\$2,000	<b>Whole</b>	\$2,000

\*Contract growing is legal and should be set up like all public works projects, e.g. road replacement, sewer repairs

\*It takes 5 years to achieve full planting dollars without increasing your budget

### Once you have a contract cycle in place:

- Annual planting dollars go back to original levels.
- You are able to achieve greater species diversity.
- You are able to get plants at predetermined prices and potentially reduced rates.
- You have a sustainable urban forest planting program in place.



# Contract Growing - Containerized Trees

- Provides high quality, diverse trees in smaller containers
- Secures a long-term, reliable supply chain of trees
- Supports innovative growing while mitigating risk for nurseries

Incorporates community needs and feedback

Shrubby trees for  
constrained  
urban areas

Showy flowers,  
aesthetic value

Less mess

Edible sources,  
tradl. fruit trees,  
food forest  
interest



# Contract Growing - Containerized Trees

Current program - 5 sets of 5 years (2020 - 2029)

- Multiple funding sources: \$250,000/set: \$50,000/year
- Payment in 5 equal installments, yearly check ins
- Up to 2,000 trees per set provides steady supply for the next 5 years

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Term	2020 - 2025	2021 - 2026	2022 - 2027	2023 - 2028	2024 - 2029
Cost	\$249,215	\$250,005	\$250,034	\$249,310	Out for Bid
# of Trees	1,633	1,885	1,634	1,865	
# of Species	39	45	41	36	

*Receiving faster growing species from first set this fall*





# Contract Growing - Containerized Trees

Draft modified program - Federal IRA funding

- Smaller scale - focus on urban grower contracts
- Address urban constraints and community needs
- Green job training and industry representation

<b>DRAFT Terms</b>	Diameter	Duration	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	
<b>Term 1 (10-15gal)</b>	1" - 1.5"	3-4 years	2000 trees					
<b>Term 2 (10-15gal)</b>	1" - 1.5"	3-4 years		500 trees				
<b>Term 3 (7 gal)</b>	.75" - 1"	2-3 years		1005 trees & LG shrubs				
<b>Term 4 (7gal)</b>	.75" - 1"	2-3 years			1224 trees & LG shrubs			

The Future is Bright!



Possibility Place Nursery Visit August 1, 2024



**CHICAGO  
REGION  
TREES  
INITIATIVE**

Our Trees.  
Our Communities.  
Our Future.

**Thank You!**

Trinity Pierce, CRTI Senior Stewardship Manager  
tpierce@mortonarb.org  
The Morton Arboretum