

# WESTERVILLE, OHIO

## 2011-2021 Tree Canopy Summary

### Community & County Overview

The City of Westerville has an estimated population of 39,163 residents and encompasses an area of 12.75 square miles. In Westerville, 29.8% of land is covered by tree canopy compared to 23.9% of land in Franklin County<sup>1</sup>.

Trees provide essential ecosystem services. Franklin County's trees save \$10 million by absorbing stormwater, \$8 million by storing carbon, and \$15 million of avoided healthcare costs from air pollution<sup>2</sup>.

**Westerville**  
**365,700**  
 Estimated total trees

**+196 Acres**  
 Area change in tree canopy from new plantings & incremental growth  
 (558.2 acres of gain - 362.1 acres of loss).

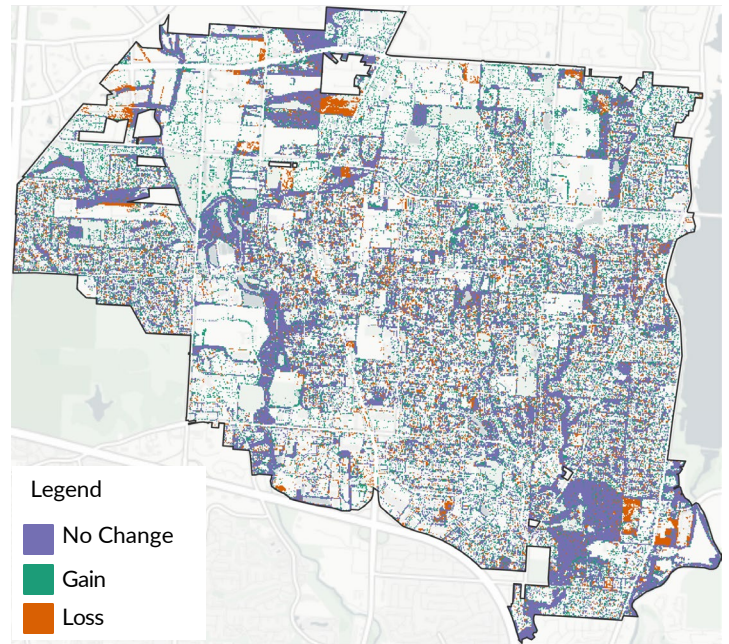
**+2.4%**  
 Change in tree canopy area

**Franklin County**  
**12.8 Million**  
 Estimated total trees

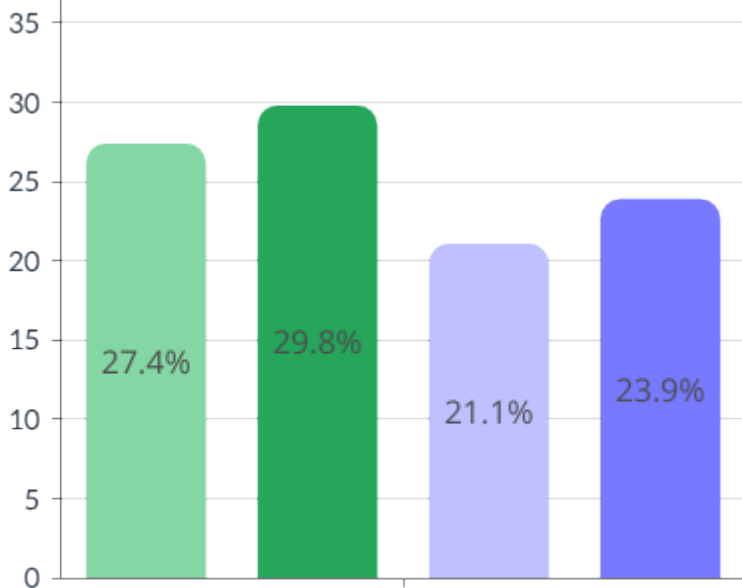
**+9,712 Acres**  
 Area change in tree canopy from new plantings & incremental growth  
 (19,202 acres of gain - 9,490 acres of loss).

**+2.8%**  
 Change in tree canopy area

### 2011-2021 Tree Canopy Change Map






### Tree Canopy (%)



■ Westerville 2011    ■ Westerville 2021  
■ Franklin County 2011    ■ Franklin County 2021

### Key Terms

Tree canopy is defined as the layer of leaves, branches, and stems that provide tree coverage of the ground when viewed from above.

-  **Existing Tree Canopy** - The amount of tree canopy present when viewed from above using aerial or satellite imagery.
-  **Possible Tree Canopy - Vegetated:** Grass or shrub area that is theoretically available for the establishment of tree canopy.
-  **Change in Tree Canopy** - the percentage point change between the two time periods.

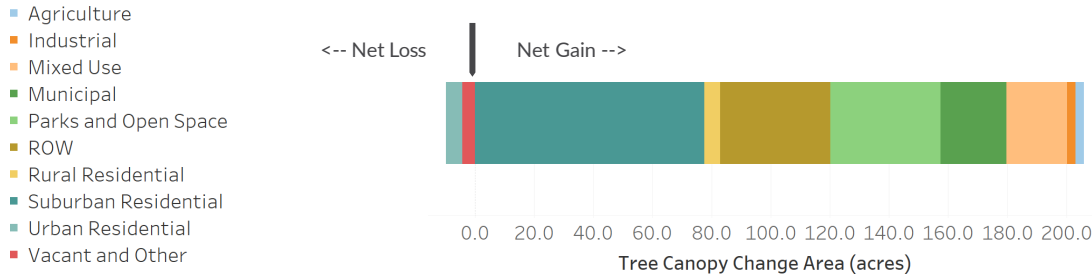
<sup>1</sup> Population and area mileage from 2021 Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and Franklin County Engineer's Office data. <sup>2</sup>Ecosystem services calculations are based on the iTree Eco methodology and values for Franklin County. Nowak, D.J., 2021. Understanding i-Tree: 2021 summary of programs and methods. US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northern Research Station.

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### Canopy Change by Land Use

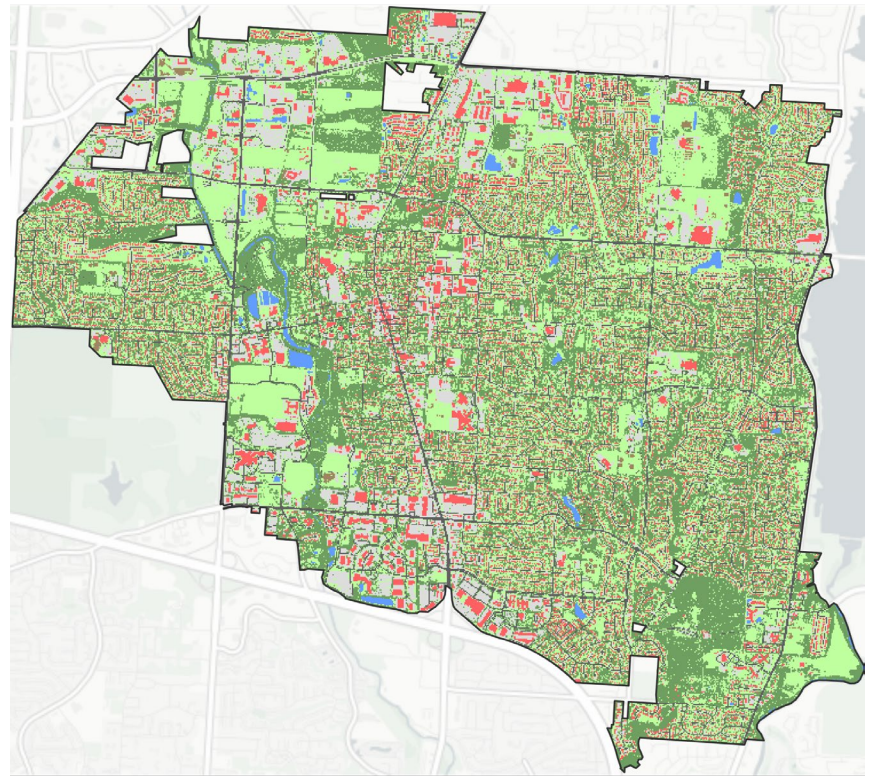
The City of Westerville gained the most canopy on Suburban Residential land use and had the most net loss in canopy on Urban Residential land use.



### Possible Tree Canopy

In Westerville, 36% of land could be planted with additional trees, compared to 48% in Franklin County. Tree canopy is one of seven classifications from the high-resolution land cover map (right) that forms the foundation of this project. In this assessment, any areas with no trees, buildings, roads, or bodies of water are considered Possible Tree Canopy and represent locations in which trees could theoretically be established without having to remove paved surfaces.

### 2021 Land Cover Map



### Environmental Equity

- **Tree Canopy:** The extent of canopy cover in Westerville is 29.8% of its total land area while it is 23.9% for Franklin County.
- **Temperature:** The average high in °F for Westerville is 94 (max. 98), and 93 (max. 107) for Franklin County in 2021. Combining this information with tree canopy values allows us to understand the role trees could play in reducing heat islands.
- **Asthma Rate:** Average asthma rates per 1,000 residents in Westerville are 9.67 while this value is 9.93 for Franklin County. Combining this information with tree canopy values allows us to understand the role trees could play in removing pollutants from the air.
- **Income:** Westerville has a median household income of \$70,164, while Franklin County's is \$59,097. Combining this information with tree canopy values allows us to understand the role trees could play in promoting equity for socio-economically vulnerable groups.

### Recommendations



Preserving existing tree canopy is the most effective means for securing future tree canopy, as loss is an event but gain is a process.



Plant new trees in areas where tree canopy is low or in locations where there has been tree canopy removed to help grow canopy.



Refer to the full Tree Canopy Assessment and corresponding geographic data available by Franklin County and its jurisdictions to help manage trees.