Mercer Island, Washington
TREE CANOPY ASSESSMENT

Every day, the trees in Mercer Island create meaningful, measurable benefits for the community, economy, and environment. These trees, known collectively as the urban forest, are essential infrastructure that helps manage stormwater, clean the air and water, store carbon, and create a healthier, more enjoyable city.

Tree Canopy (2023)
51%
of the land area was covered with canopy in 2023

Plantable Space (2023)
15%
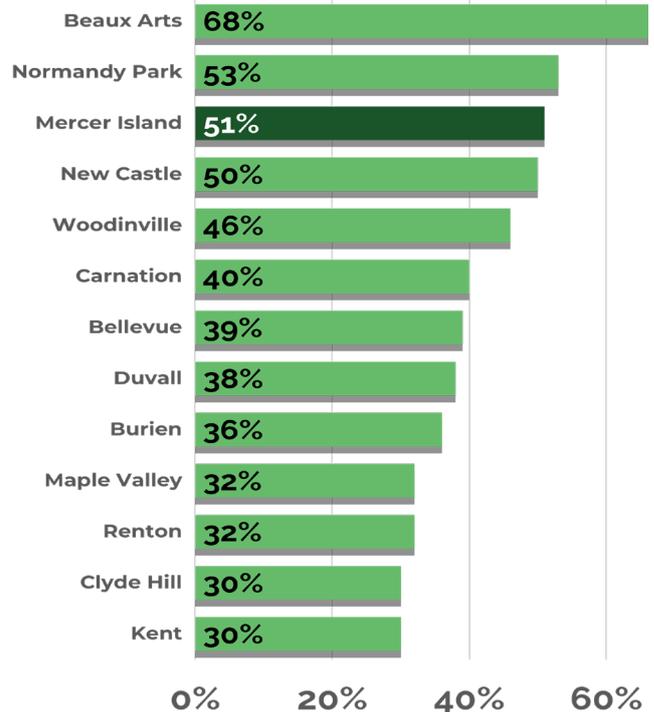of the land area was suitable for planting

Tree Canopy change
6.5 acres
of canopy gained from 2017 to 2023

Mercer Island has one of the densest tree canopies in King County, and the overall canopy coverage has remained relatively stable. The most significant increases in canopy were observed in Business (B) and Planned Business (PB) zones, likely due to the maturation of the existing trees. However, the most notable losses between 2017 and 2023 occurred in low-density residential zones (R-12 and R-15). Specifically, R-12 areas saw a net decrease in canopy coverage of 2.5%.

In terms of canopy potential, residential areas also offer the most significant opportunity for growth, with more than 500 acres of plantable space across Mercer Island's four residential zoning types. The strategic placement of canopy in the right-of-way (ROW) is also essential. These high-traffic areas contain 319 acres of tree canopy and have added 9 acres since 2017. The ROW also includes 73 acres of land for future tree planting. Together, these findings underscore the need for focused, community-driven action to protect existing trees and strategically expand the canopy where it is needed most.

TREE CANOPY COVERAGE PERCENT BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS

- Less than 34% coverage
- 35% to 45% coverage
- 46% to 51% coverage
- 52% to 56% coverage
- Greater than 57% coverage
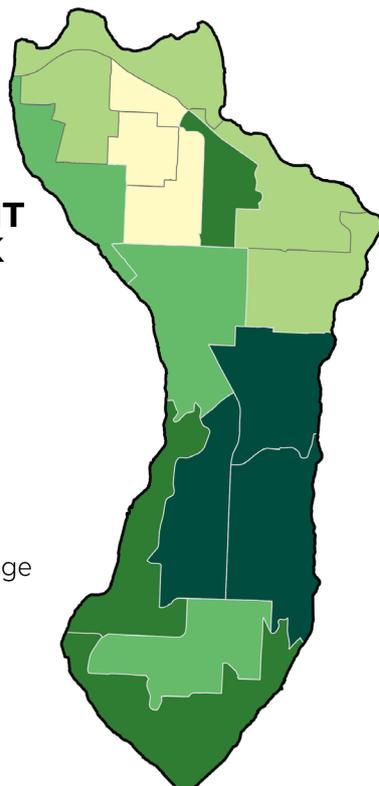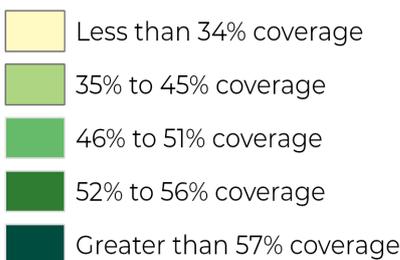
2023 Regional Canopy Cover

Location	Canopy Cover
Beaux Arts	68%
Normandy Park	53%
Mercer Island	51%
New Castle	50%
Woodinville	46%
Carnation	40%
Bellevue	39%
Duvall	38%
Burien	36%
Maple Valley	32%
Renton	32%
Clyde Hill	30%
Kent	30%

Report prepared for the King Conservation District | Project conducted by PlanIT Geo, Inc. www.planitgeo.com | info@planitgeo.com

PlanIT Geo™ developers of TreePlotter

earth define

$175,658
Total annual value of ecosystem services from Mercer Island's trees

$56,279
CARBON SEQUESTRATION

3,181,426 pounds of carbon dioxide sequestered

4,199
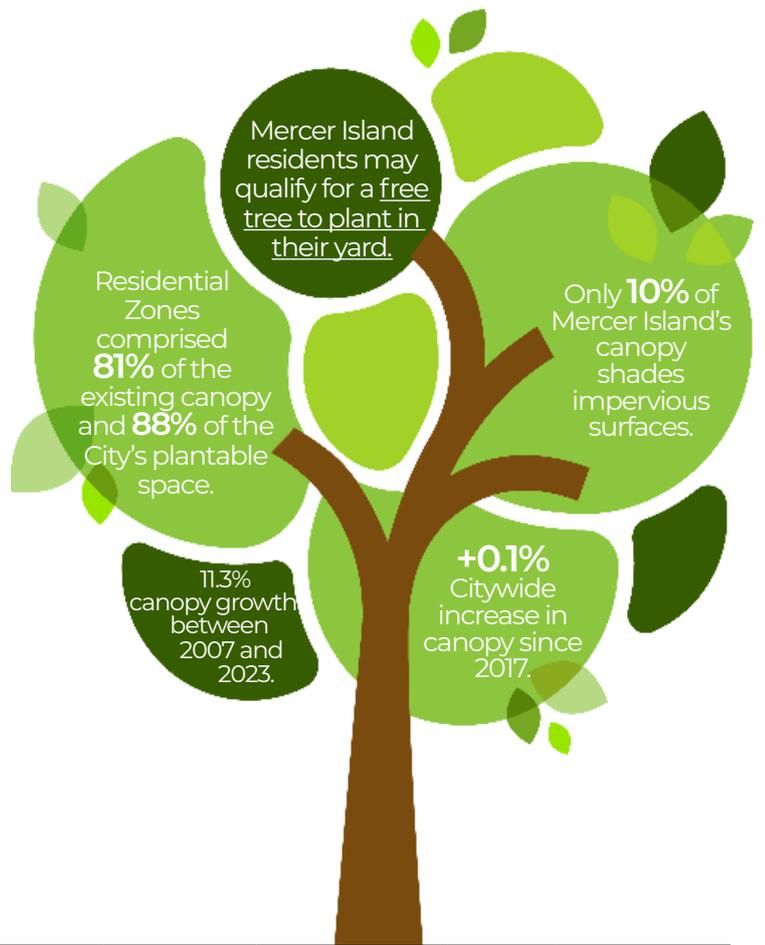**AIR QUALITY**

24,453 pounds of pollutants removed from the air

$115,179
STORMWATER MITIGATION

12,762,950 gallons of stormwater diverted

I-Tree Landscape tools were utilized to calculate the benefits and cost savings associated with the tree canopy. This analysis was further refined using the high-resolution (60 cm) canopy data from the 2025 assessment.

Mercer Island residents may qualify for a <u>free tree to plant in their yard.</u>

Residential Zones comprised **81%** of the existing canopy and **88%** of the City's plantable space.

Only **10%** of Mercer Island's canopy shades impervious surfaces.

11.3% canopy growth between 2007 and 2023.

+0.1% Citywide increase in canopy since 2017.

Zoning Class	2017	2023				Canopy Change (2017 - 2023)	
	Canopy Percent	Plantable Space Acres	Canopy Acres	Canopy Percent	*Citywide Canopy Distribution	Acres	Percentage Change
Business (B)	45%	0	1	48%	0.1%	0.1	2.5%
Commercial Office (C-O)	28%	2	5	30%	0.3%	0.3	1.5%
Multi-Family (MF)	37%	2	45	41%	2%	2	1.8%
Open Space (OS)	98%	1	222	98%	11%	0.6	0.2%
Planned Business (PBZ)	24%	1	4	27%	0.2%	0.4	2.6%
Public Institution (PI)	32%	50	96	33%	5%	3.0	1.0%
Residential (R-12)	49%	14	37	47%	2%	-2.1	-2.6%
Residential (R-15)	60%	172	734	60%	36%	0.1	0.0%
Residential (R-8.4)	42%	134	327	42%	16%	1.1	0.1%
Residential (R-9.6)	47%	201	574	47%	28%	0.6	0.0%
Town Center (TC)	18%	2	15	19%	1%	0.5	0.7%
Total	**51%**	**579**	**2,060**	**51%**	**101.6%***	**6.6**	**0%**
Right-of-Way (ROW)	**42%**	**73**	**319**	**43%**	**6%**	**9**	**1%**

The citywide canopy distribution exceeds 100% due to overlapping zoning classifications.

Tree Canopy in 2009
39.8%
1,606 ACRES

Tree Canopy in *2017
51.0%
2,054 ACRES

Tree Canopy in 2023
51.1%
2,060 ACRES

The updated 2017 canopy metrics reflect improvements in mapping methods from the previously reported 48% in 2017. The 2017 imagery was reanalyzed using updated classification techniques to ensure greater accuracy and consistent comparisons across all years.

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