

NYC Parks

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Press Releases

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NYC PARKS ANNOUNCES HIGHEST TOTAL OF TREES PLANTED IN EIGHT YEARS

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+15,000 trees already planted in FY24, more than 18,000 total projected by July

Record number of trees contribute to lowering temperatures in the face of heat crisis and get the City closer to 30 percent canopy coverage goal

+3,000 planted in heat vulnerable neighborhoods

NYC Parks today celebrated a massive milestone in tree canopy expansion with the most trees planted in a single year since 2016. Already in FY24, Parks has planted more than 15,000 trees on city streets and in parks, with another 3,000 plantings projected by the end of the fiscal year – bringing the expected total to more than 18,000 trees. This is the third consecutive year in which Parks has increased its planting numbers, showing that New York City and NYC Parks are back working harder than ever to make the city cooler and more livable for New Yorkers. This is the largest tree planting total in the last 8 years and represents another critical step forward in the administration's commitment to achieve 30% canopy cover across the city.

Thanks to a \$136 million capital investment made by the Adams administration in the Fiscal Year 2023 Executive Budget (April 2022), NYC Parks expects to plant a tree in every viable spot in the most heat-vulnerable neighborhoods (HVI4 & 5) by 2027.

"Trees are a crucial investment in New York City's climate resiliency infrastructure, and NYC Parks is proud to announce another record setting year in tree planting throughout the city," said **NYC Parks Commissioner Sue Donoghue**. "New Yorkers rely on our trees to provide vital shade, and with climate change leading to more frequent, intense heat, the need is more prevalent than ever. With the support of this Mayoral Administration, NYC Parks is facing the challenge of climate resiliency head on, keeping New York livable and prepared across every borough."

In an effort to curb the impacts of the heat island effect, Parks focuses tree planting in neighborhoods most at risk from excessive heat. Over 3,000 of the new FY24 plantings are in heat vulnerable neighborhoods (*HVI neighborhoods* (<https://a816-dohbesp.nyc.gov/IndicatorPublic/HeatHub/hvi.html>) with a score of 4 or 5) and parks across the city. These neighborhoods include:

Bronx: Williamsbridge, Woodlawn, Eastchester, Edenwald, Soundview, Morris Park

Brooklyn: Seagate, Coney Island, East Flatbush, Bushwick, Crown Heights, Flatlands, Sunset Park

Manhattan: West Harlem, East Harlem, Lower East Side

Queens: Hunters Point, Sunnyside, Long Island City, Elmhurst, Laurelton

Each summer, an estimated 350 New Yorkers die prematurely due to heat and more Americans die from heat

waves in a year than all other natural disasters combined.

The agency's efforts to recruit and onboard new contractors, especially minority and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBEs), continues paying off. Since 2022, Parks has brought on eight new M/WBE planting vendors, increasing the pool of bidders for tree planting contracts and leading to more trees planted across the city. Nearly 5,962 trees were planted as a result, doubling down on Parks' commitment to equity, not just in neighborhood greenspaces, but in the allocation of contracts and resources.

New York City is home to more than 7 million trees, including more than 200 species. Trees cool neighborhoods, beautify city streets, soften the hard edges of concrete and brick, and are a source of pride for New Yorkers.

New Yorkers can sign up for stewardship events via the NYC Parks website (<https://www.nycgovparks.org/reg/stewardship%22%20%EF%B7%9FHYPERLINK%20%22https://www.nycgovparks.org/opportunities/volunteer>), or care for their neighborhood trees by watering trees weekly and weeding unwanted plants from tree beds -- and young trees are extra thirsty! Record your tree care activities on the NYC Tree Map at nyc.gov/parks/treemap.