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**Phase One of its mission to re-tree streets:
Northampton seeks planting volunteers**

The City of Northampton will undertake ambitious tree planting this fall, and is actively seeking volunteers to assist in this effort.

Aiming to reverse a recent decline in public shade trees and to improve Northampton's livability, the Public Shade Tree Commission, in collaboration with Tree Warden Rich Parasiliti, will organize the planting of 160 public shade trees, quadrupling the annual number of trees that the City typically plants.

"We've purchased a nice diversity of trees thanks to the Mayor's newly established tree budget," said Parasiliti. "Now we need a cadre of skilled volunteers to help plant them and water them through their first years of life".

Individuals interested in planting and watering trees may contact Tree Commissioner, Jen Werner, at jenwerner@usa.net or 413-575-8959. Volunteer planters will be asked to undergo a short training in proper tree planting. Most plantings will occur on Saturday mornings throughout October.

"Cool, tree-lined streets will make our city even more pleasant to live, walk, and shop in," said Mayor David Narkewicz. "I hope to be out there planting too."

As further effort to improve its tree canopy, the City of Northampton is also applying for a grant through the Department of Conservation and Recreation to conduct a complete, professional inventory of Northampton's public shade trees. In Fall 2014, Northampton citizens organized a sample tree inventory but, as Lilly Lombard, chair of Northampton's Public Shade Tree Commission remarked, "A thorough, professional tree inventory is the first step in creating a comprehensive urban tree program. We will better know how and where to grow once we take stock of what we currently have."

This September, the Tree Commission will also conduct a survey to solicit citizen input regarding an overall vision for Northampton's tree canopy. Stay tuned as the survey becomes available online and in hard copy at the Senior Center, Department of Public Works, and the Mayor's office.

More details at: <http://northamptonma.gov/781/Public-Shade-Tree-Commission>