

New Community Tree Guide Reference City

Honolulu, Hawaii Chosen as Reference City for the *Tropics Community Tree Guide: Benefits, Costs, and Strategic Planting*

New Reference City

The city of Honolulu is taking innovative, bold and lasting steps to improve the state of urban and community forestry across the region. Because of Honolulu's leadership and commitment to managing and caring for its public trees, the city was selected as the reference city for the *Tropics Community Tree Guide: Benefits, Costs, and Strategic Planting*.

Tree Guide Series and iTree Software

The Community Tree Guide Series is the result of research by the Center for Urban Forest Research, a research branch of the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station in Davis, CA. Our research combines regional data about street trees and environmental conditions with computer modeling in order to place a dollar value on the ecosystem services trees provide, including:

- Conserving energy
- Reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide
- Improving air quality
- Conserving water
- Enhancing aesthetics

The results of the study in Honolulu, achieved through close collaboration with the Honolulu Department of Parks and Recreation, also provide the underlying data for the Tropics region for use in the iTree software suite. The iTree software programs are available to the public without cost to assist communities to calculate the benefits of their own trees.

Tropics

The Tropics region is one of the 19 national climate zones recognized by the Center for Urban Forest Research. Cities within a zone have similar species of trees with similar growth habits and size traits. The information in the Guide will influence community forestry programs for other islands in the region. Regional information that will be used in the computer modeling includes:

- Climate information
- Building construction patterns
- Energy use
- Fuel mix for energy production
- Air pollutant concentrations



Honolulu's Trees

The community trees of Honolulu are currently being measured by Davey Resource Group under a cooperative agreement with the Center for Urban Forest Research. The collected data include:

- Tree species, height, trunk diameter, and crown diameter
- Location of nearby buildings and surrounding land use
- Planting space size
- Trunk and leaf condition
- Conflicts with wires and sidewalks

This information will be used to develop formulas to describe how trees in the region grow, how trees are distributed throughout the city, and the benefits the trees provide.

Benefit–Cost Information

The Guides offer valuable information for communities about the balance between the economic benefits and costs of trees. By comparing the dollar value of ecosystem services provided by trees with the cost of tree maintenance we can see just how valuable those services are and how worthwhile it is to invest in the care of our trees.

Too often, urban tree programs are diminished by the false idea that trees can take care of themselves. Municipal trees are the “green infrastructure” of the community and are just as important as streets, sidewalks, traffic control and other features. Trees more than pay us back for our investment in their care by providing a safe, healthy, attractive and more energy-efficient place to live.