



Allentown Environmental Advisory Council

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July 27, 2026

Allentown City Council
435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, PA 18101

Re: Support for the Urban Canopy

Dear Mayor Tuerk and Members of Allentown City Council:

The Allentown Environmental Advisory Council (AEAC) wishes to express our continued support for preserving and expanding Allentown's urban tree canopy as discussions regarding the City's shade tree policies move forward.

Trees are an essential component of our City's infrastructure. Beyond their aesthetic value, they improve air quality, reduce urban heat, manage stormwater, enhance public health, support biodiversity, and contribute to more resilient and higher property valued neighborhoods. As Allentown continues to grow, and the impacts of a changing climate become more prevalent, maintaining a healthy urban forest remains a critical investment in the long-term environmental, economic, and social well-being of our community.

One of the AEAC's goals for 2026 is to “continue supporting and advising on increasing the urban tree canopy through the adoption of the Urban Forestry Master Plan...” At a recent outreach event related to this plan, community input was taken and updates were provided on the plan thus far. Many of the initiatives discussed are intended to address priorities and concerns identified throughout the planning process, including concerns about costs associated with trees and the disproportionate impact those costs can have on low-income and environmental justice neighborhoods.

As Council considers potential changes to shade tree policies, we encourage those discussions to remain aligned with the long-term vision of expanding our tree canopy and community input reflected in the Urban Forestry Master Plan.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the future of Allentown.

Sincerely,

The Allentown EAC