

The Faces of Urban Forestry



John Sylvia
Human relations specialist



Street Tree Planting Project Makes Important Impacts

John Sylvia lives in a mixed-use area of homes and small businesses in Fall River, a community of 88,000 residents. When a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation made possible the Fall River Street Planting Program, John took advantage of an offer to have 20 large-caliper trees planted in a median strip in front of his home. Now he can't say enough about the project.

"What makes me feel good is how much it has improved the area and how it makes our neighbors feel. The trees show others that this is a nice place and the local businesses, especially the new ones, are trying to keep up (with additional plantings)," says John. "You can't always see the difference you can make, but this is something that you can see and it does make a difference," he adds.

The success of this program of high profile plantings has prompted the city to invest in its urban forest by creating a city tree nursery and making a commitment to hire a city arborist. "Seeing those trees, I knew it would improve the area," says John. Just as importantly, the new trees stimulated a whole new perspective for urban forestry in Fall River.

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A joint project of U.S. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry, the National Association of State Foresters, and the Arbor Day Foundation. For more information visit arborday.org/faces