OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY
CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY FUND

Shading Our Future - Progress Report

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Requested Metrics

The following is a summary of trees installed and related costs.
Volunteer Sites:
Site: Trees: Type:
Koffler Building 6 Desert Willow
ARB Walkway 7 Mesquite
Math Building 5 Mesquite
Koffler Building (2) 3 Mesquite
Civil Engineering 5 Oak, Ash, Ironwood
Modern Languages 6 Oak
Total Cost: $5808.29
Volunteer site costs included costs for the trees and delivery.
Some minor additional irrigation materials were purchased for a total of $195.10.
Average Cost per tree: $187.61

Contractor Sites:
Site: Trees: Type:
Enke Dr Sidewalk 8 Willow Acacia
McKale lawn 8 Sycamore, Mesquite
Arizona/Sonora Dorm 11 Eucalyptus, Pine
Total Cost: $16,650.00
Contractor site costs included costs for trees, tree stakes, delivery, labor.
Additional costs for irrigation system upgrades were provided for a total of $1,600.
Average Cost per tree: $651.79

Project Accomplishments

Goal was to install forty trees on campus designed to increase shade in key pedestrian and bike-commuting areas across campus to maximize impact and enhance the campus's heat resilience.
Ultimately sixty, twenty-five gallon container trees were installed by this project.
At maturity this project will increase the shade canopy on campus by over 6,000 square feet.
Student engagement included six tree planting days with the U of A chapter of the Epsilon Eta Environmental Honors Fraternity. Thirty-two trees were installed with over fifty student volunteers participated over the six volunteer work days.
U of A University Facility Services assisted with preparing the volunteer work day sites. Holes were

excavated and minor irrigation repairs were made to enable the trees to be installed and assisted with site clean up and trash removal after the events. The UFS irrigation team provided additional repairs and materials when existing systems were damaged or expanded. The efforts of UFS that were provided at no additional cost to the project, reducing overall costs significantly.
The project also engaged a private contractor to install trees on three sites.
Twenty-seven trees were installed by the contractor. Their work also included extending irrigation to the trees installed at the sites. Contractor work was utilized strategically within the project to best use their services. Sites were selected that were beyond the skills and timeline to be completed with the Epsilon Eta volunteers and that were determined to be beyond the ability of the UFS teams to deliver within their current workload and staffing levels.
Engagement of the campus community was provided by a tree planting event on campus to recognize National Arbor Day on April 24, 2026. The event was organized by the Office of Sustainability and was well attended by administrators, students and staff. There were six trees planted at Modern Languages building as part of that event.

Next Steps

The installation of trees on campus is a multi-decade timeline to full benefit. Trees will grow and provide shade to areas that did not have shade before, encouraging more pedestrian activity and bike use on campus. These trees will benefit the campus community for years and provide a (hopefully) permanent impact to the campus environment. These trees will not only add much needed canopy for shade but also help broaden the bio diversity of tree species. These trees are now part of the overall campus plant palette and are officially included in the Arboretum collection and inventory.
Long term success will be part of the UFS Grounds maintenance team responsibility. Maintenance including irrigation, pruning and overall health will be provided by UFS Grounds and Arbor care teams. Trees will be monitored for the next year and the existing tree stakes will be removed when the trees are strong enough to support themselves.
There is also opportunity to continue engagement with student groups like Epsilon Eta to assist in the maintenance or to continue the project in future years, installing trees on campus. I would encourage student groups and academic programs to organize smaller, focused tree installation projects around campus. These smaller projects could be a great way to build relationships within programs, within 'districts' on campus and provide student groups a way to have a lasting impact on campus - "Hey, I planted that tree back in..." is a powerful way to provide legacy and instill pride of place.

Challenges Faced

The main challenge on this project was coordination with internal services. Several administrative and organizational structure changes happened within the first few months of kick off of this project. There were several unknowns around project set up and approvals, pricing forecasting and scheduling of work delayed start of work by several months. Now that those challenges have been worked out, similar projects now have a clear path to be implemented. Cross department coordination and communication have been defined and should not delay a similar project in the future.
Other challenges were logistics of utility locations, irrigation availability and trash/site clean up after events. These are coordination items that all have potential for error or miscommunication. Extra diligence is required selecting sites and making sure all entities are notified of the project in order to

appropriately coordinate the work.

Media/Links

There were speeches given and photos taken at the Arbor Day event. A short blurb and photo were posted in 'Seen on Campus' Sustainability team has photos.

Recommendations

there are many opportunities for tree installation projects on campus. they can be complicated with utilities and water/irrigation systems not being well mapped in some areas of campus. This type of project could evolve into smaller, focused landscape improvements, complimentary projects with water harvesting (like at the civil engineering site), edible landscapes, mapping and signage outreach all come to mind for future efforts.