



HISTORIC NORCROSS'

WALKING TOUR OF

TREES



www.NorcrossGa.net



TREE CITY USA®

THRASHER PARK TREE TOUR

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Welcome to the City of Norcross' Tree Walk. Norcross' historic downtown area with picturesque rows of restored narrow brick buildings illuminated by old-fashioned street lamps is complemented by our abundant tree canopy. We are very proud of our trees and the charm they add to our town, particularly the many large, old specimen trees. We hope you will enjoy walking through two of our lovely downtown parks admiring and learning about the variety of trees in our canopy that you will see along the way.

TREES IN THE TOUR

- 1** AMERICAN ELM
- 2** PECAN
- 3** EASTERN HEMLOCK
- 4** BLACK LOCUST
- 5** AMERICAN BEECH
- 6** RED MAPLE
- 7** SUGAR MAPLE
- 8** AMERICAN HOLLY
- 9** SOUTHERN MAGNOLIA
- 10** WATER OAK
- 11** GREEN ASH
- 12** CRAPE MYRTLE
- 13** WILLOW OAK

TREE MAP

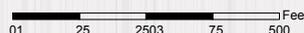


LEGEND

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1 American Elm | 6 Red Maple |
| 2 Pecan | 7 Sugar Maple |
| 3 Eastern Hemlock | 8 American Holly |
| 4 Black Locust | 9 Southern Magnolia |
| 5 American Beech | 10 Water Oak |

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|-----------------|
| 11 Green Ash |
| 12 Crape Myrtle |
| 13 Willow Oak |

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|---|
|  Trees |
|  Tree Walk Path |
|  Start/End Point |
|  Parks |



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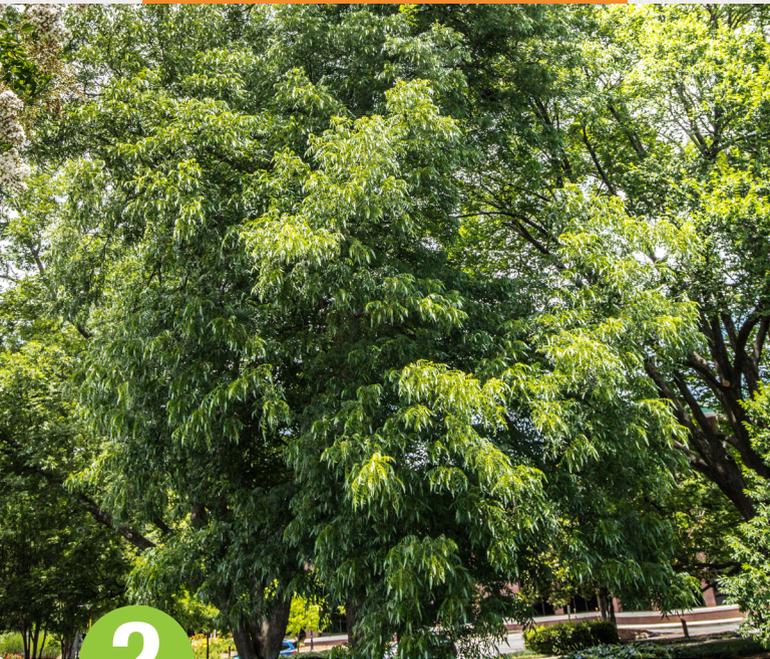
1 AMERICAN ELM

Our tree walk begins at Tree No. 1, an American Elm that is standing proudly in Betty Mauldin Park next to our City Hall. This tree has been judged by the Georgia Forestry Commission to be the number one champion American elm tree for the State of Georgia. As of August 16, 2016, this tree stands 80' tall with a circumference of 233 inches (nearly 19 ½ feet around) and has a crown spread of 125 feet.

Native to North America the American elm was an abundant tree in North American forests. When L'Enfant and George Washington laid out the city of Washington they envisioned it with tree lined streets and the American elm was the chosen tree because of its tall upright form. This was once a popular and common tree found along city streets all over the U.S. reaching heights over 100 feet. Tragically the American elm has been devastated in many parts of its natural range by Dutch elm disease, which was introduced into the U.S. on a shipment of logs from Europe in the 1930's. This catastrophe prompted the discouragement of planting monocultures of any single species of trees in cityscapes.

The wood of the elm has an interlocking grain that makes it resistant to splitting, and it was highly valued by the furniture industry and by wheelwrights for making wagon wheels.

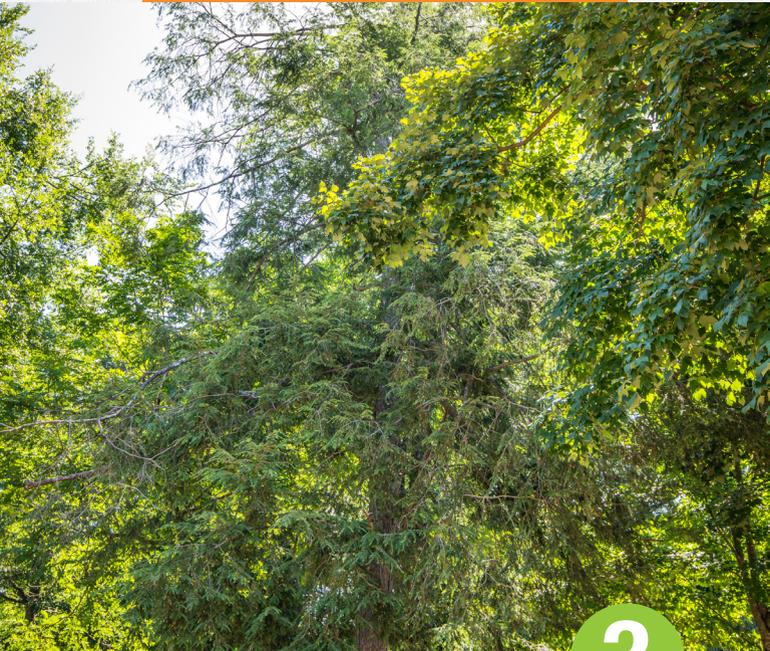
While the American elm is the State Tree of Massachusetts and North Dakota, this tree, which is at one of the city's gateways, is one of Norcross' proudest landmarks and has been welcoming visitors for over a century!



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2 PECAN

The pecan tree is of the hickory species and is native to the Mississippi River Valley and Georgia. Its nuts were a food source for Native Americans and were consumed and traded between the tribes. These nuts can provide two to five times more energy per unit weight than wild game, require no preparation and can lie on the ground for a year and still be edible. The Algonquin Indians called the "Paccan," meaning hard nut that takes a rock to crack. The U.S. provides more than 80% of the world's pecans with Georgia being the number one pecan producing state. The tree produces nuts every year and also provides great shade and sports an amazing wood grain that makes it highly prized as wood for furniture and flooring as well. It can live up to 200 years and grow to a height of 100 to 130 feet.



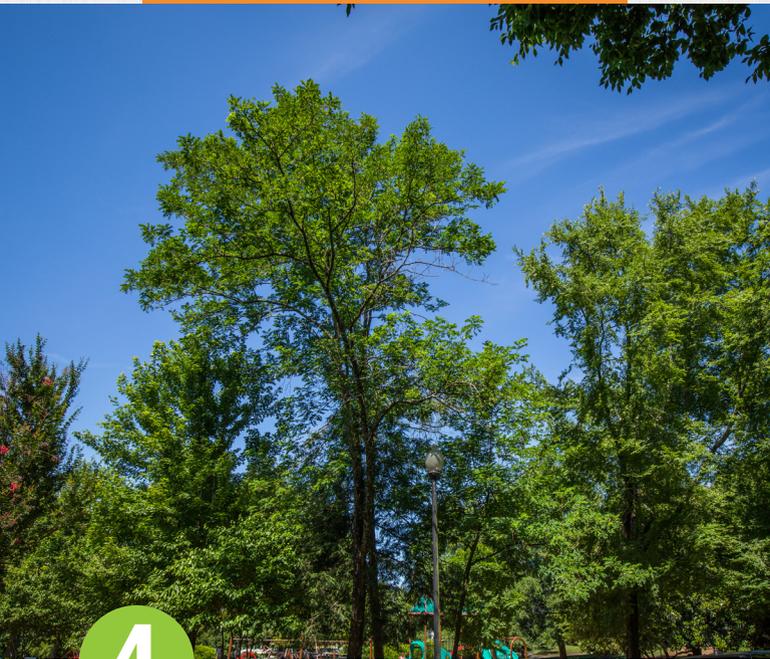
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3 EASTERN HEMLOCK

The Eastern Hemlock is a large coniferous evergreen tree native to North America and is very long lived. The oldest known specimen is 554 years old! The tallest surviving Hemlock is 170 feet tall. Although slow growing as a landscape tree, it is a favorite for privacy screens and hedges because of its handsome, graceful appearance and its ability to survive shearing to any shape or height. The lumber is used for general utilitarian construction and crates. Because of its unusual power of holding spikes, it is also used for railroad ties.

The species is currently threatened by the hemlock wooly adelgid, a sap-sucking bug accidentally introduced from East Asia to the U.S. in 1924. Virtually all the hemlocks in the Appalachian Mountains from northeastern Georgia to southeastern Maine have seen infestations within the last five to seven years. The tree is also susceptible to acid rain that is the result of air pollution.

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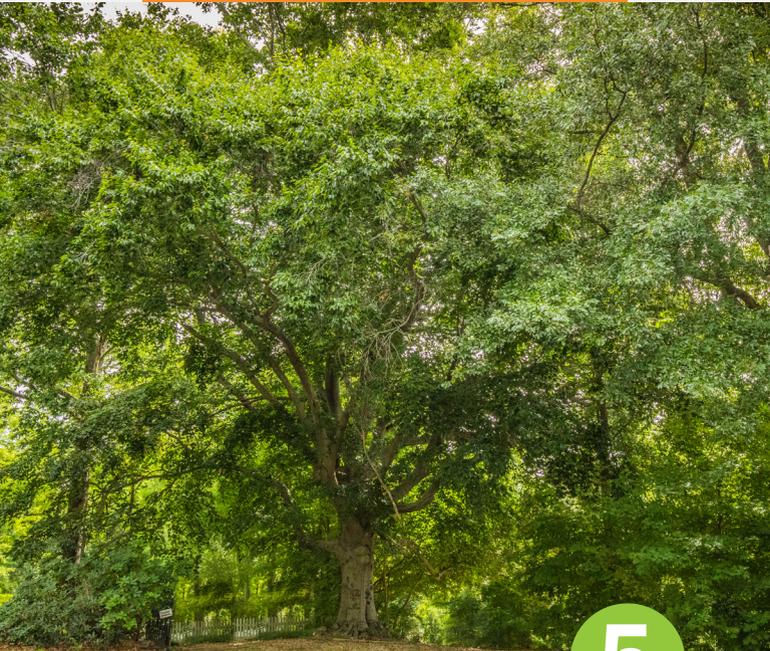


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4 BLACK LOCUST

The black locust is native to the eastern U.S. The name 'locust' is said to have been given to the tree by Jesuit missionaries, who fancied that this was the tree that supported John the Baptist in the wilderness. However, the black locust is native only to North America. It grows to 80' tall and 2' to 4' in diameter.

As the strongest timber in North America, the black locust helped build Jamestown and American navy ships that decided the War of 1812. It was nicknamed "the tree upon which America was built." It is very resistant to rot, and durable, making it prized for furniture, flooring, paneling, fence posts, and watercraft. As a young man, Abraham Lincoln spent his time splitting rails and fence posts from black locust logs. Black locust is highly valued as firewood for wood-burning stoves because it burns slowly with little visible flame or smoke, and has a high heat content.



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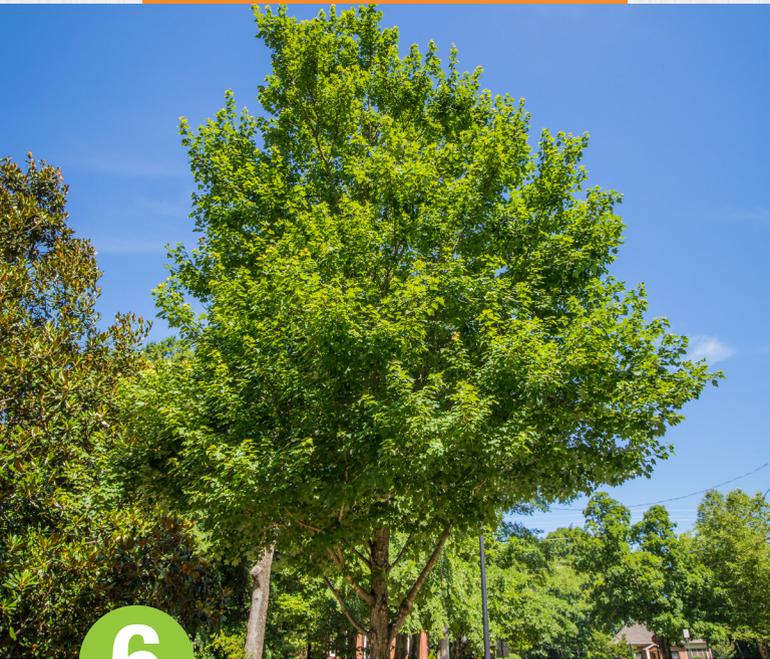
5 AMERICAN BEECH

The formal and stately American beech holds a special place in many hearts because the bark is smooth and uniform, making it attractive to carve names and dates into its surface although this is a practice which we discourage today. One such beech tree in Louisville, Kentucky, in Iroquois Park, bears the legendary words, attributed to Daniel Boone, "D. Boone kilt a bar."

This tree species is shade-tolerant and commonly found in forests in the final stage of natural succession. The wide spreading canopy provides great shade in the summer and beautiful bronze coloring in the fall. The wood is heavy, hard, tough and strong, and until the advent of power tools, groves of beech trees were often left uncut for commercial lumber.

This versatile tree is not one you plant for fast growth and quick shade but is one that leaves a lovely legacy for future generations to enjoy. A relevant Greek proverb reminds us that "A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in."

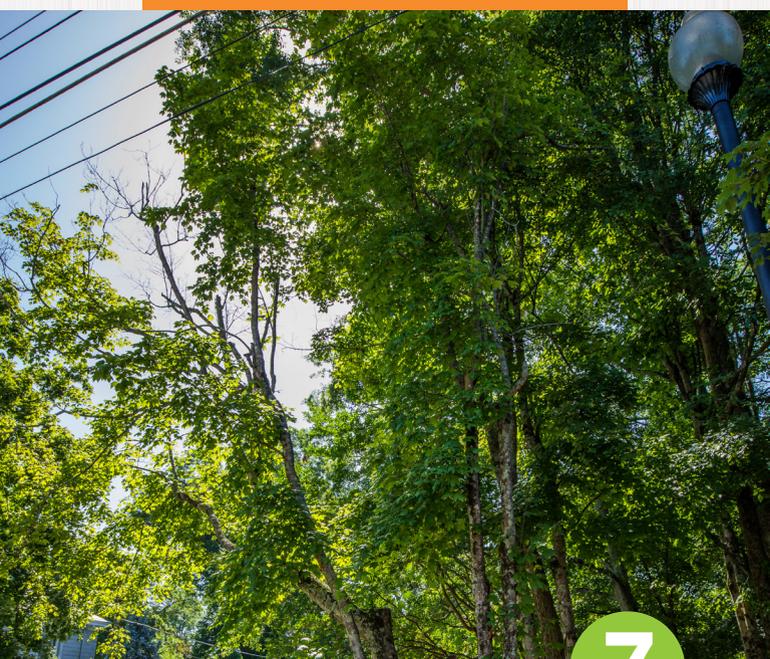
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6 RED MAPLE

The red maple is the best named of all trees because it is resplendent in red during all four seasons, showcasing red buds in the winter, red flowers in the spring, red leafstalks in the summer, and brilliant red foliage in the fall. This pageant of color, along with its tolerance for a wide range of soils and relatively fast growth, make it the most widely planted landscape shade tree. The red maple is the most common and widespread of deciduous trees in eastern and central North American forests. The U.S. Forest Service recognizes it as the most commonplace and adaptable tree in North America. Dozens of varieties of the tree have been propagated for its wide range of attractive fall colors. It is commercially used on a small scale for maple syrup and lumber. We love and enjoy our red maples here in Georgia!



7

7 SUGAR MAPLE

The sugar maple is also prized for its beautiful fall colors that range from yellow to brilliant reddish-orange. It is one of America's best-loved trees. In fact, more states have claimed it as their state tree than any other single species. While it is the primary source of maple syrup, sugar maple trees with wavy woodgrain are especially valued for furniture and gun stocks. Maple is also the wood used for basketball courts, including the floors used by the NBA, and it is a popular wood for baseball bats, pool cues, bowling alleys and bowling pins. Wood from the sugar maple is widely used in the manufacture of musical instruments, such as violins, guitars and drum shells.

Canada considers the sugar maple as one of its most important trees and the sugar maple leaf is featured on the Canadian flag. Although sugar maples thrive best in northern cooler climates, they are still a favorite landscape tree in Georgia.

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8 AMERICAN HOLLY

The American holly is a native evergreen tree of southeastern North America and is commonly found from Virginia to Florida. The male and female are different trees, with the female bearing the characteristic red berries. Holly sprigs are widely known as the everlasting symbol of Christmas cheer. In English stories and poetry the holly is inextricably linked with the Christmas season. The holly is typically a medium size understory tree with leaves remaining on the branches for two or three years before falling in the spring, when pushed off by growing buds. The berries are reputedly poisonous to humans but they are a vital food source for birds during the sparse winter months.

The wood of the holly is very pale, tough, and close-grained, but it takes polish well and is prized for cabinet work. The American holly is such an appealing tree that it is used extensively as an ornamental landscape plant.

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9 SOUTHERN MAGNOLIA

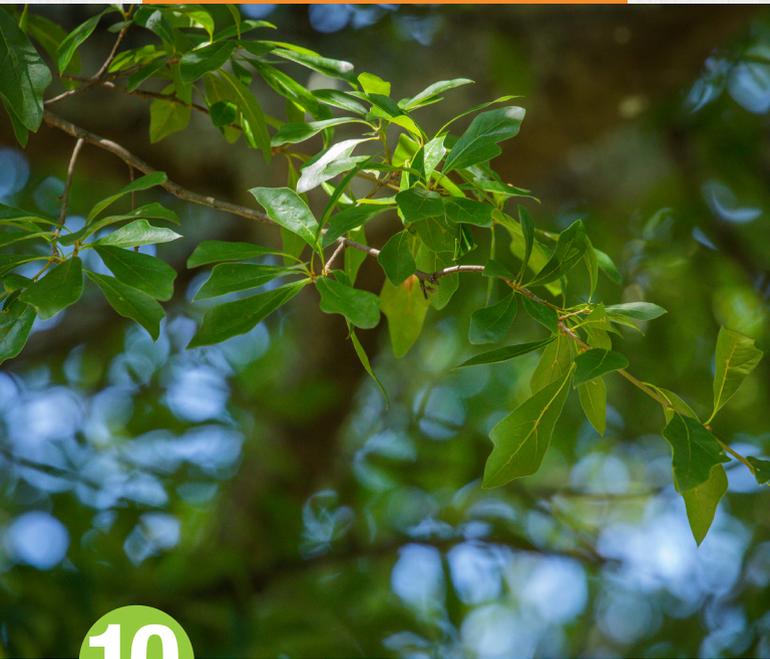
As a tree many find most representative of the South, the Southern Magnolia is an ancient species native to North America and China. It was also a native of Europe until the last ice age wiped them out. Fossils of the magnolia have been found as far back as 38 million years ago. It is a primitive tree that is pollinated by beetles instead of bees because it evolved before bees.

The magnolia was named for Pierre Magnol, the French botanist that discovered them in Florida. This hardy tree is quite tough and pest resistant and was a favorite of southern plantations where the lower branches were staked to make them root in the ground to give them more stability. Their beautiful late spring intoxicatingly aromatic flowers have become an iconic symbol of the South. Because of its value as a landscape tree it has been hybridized into scores of varieties. The Southern Magnolia is truly a beloved tree of the South.

There are four lovely magnolia trees in Thrasher Park and the large magnolia directly behind you has played a special role in Norcross history. For many years, it was the lighted Christmas tree that kicked off each holiday season. Many of Norcross' children have, over the years, enjoyed climbing its generous branches. After World War II, Norcross memorialized her five fallen soldiers by placing plaques beneath this graceful tree. Over time, the plaques became too weathered and, as part of the renovation of Thrasher Park a few years ago, the plaques were replaced by bronze markers, which were permanently placed in the retaining wall in front of the amphitheater.



THRASHER

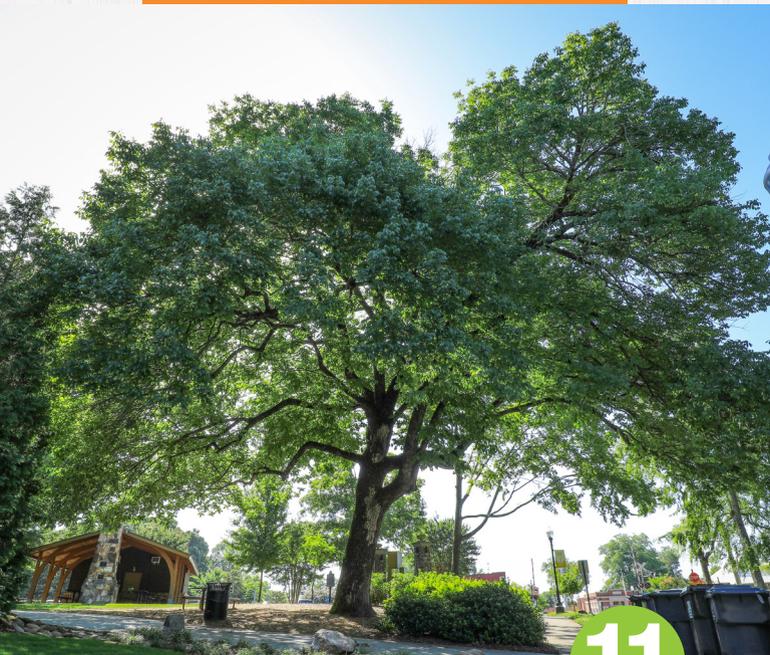


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10 WATER OAK

The Water Oak is a bottom land species of oak found all across the southeastern U.S. It is a native tree that has shown tremendous potential in its adaptability to thrive in a variety of soil types, and it is most frequently used to restore bottomland forests. It grows 60 to 70 feet tall and to a diameter of 2 to 3 feet. The water oak has been used for timber and fuel by people in the southern states since the 17th century. The biggest fans of the water oak are the wide range of wildlife who enjoy the abundant fall crop of acorns. These acorns are an important food for deer, gray squirrels, raccoons, wild turkeys, mallards, wood ducks and bobwhite quail.

The water oak has a lot of other names too: spotted oak, duck oak, punk oak, orange oak and possum oak. It is short lived compared to other species of oaks, with only about a 60 to 80 year life expectancy.



11

11 GREEN ASH

The green ash is native to the entire eastern half of North America. It can adapt to a wide range of soil and climate conditions, and it has fast growth and provides ample shade. It also has a tolerance for pollution and road salt thus making it a popular choice as a street-side tree. The white and green ash trees have superior survival traits and they are used as living national monuments. The National Park Service is protecting Thomas Jefferson's 200+ year-old green ash and George Washington's 250-year-old white ash which have a 600-year potential lifespan!

Green ash wood, because of its strength, hardness, high shock resistance and excellent bending qualities is used in specialty items such as tool handles and most famously for baseball bats.

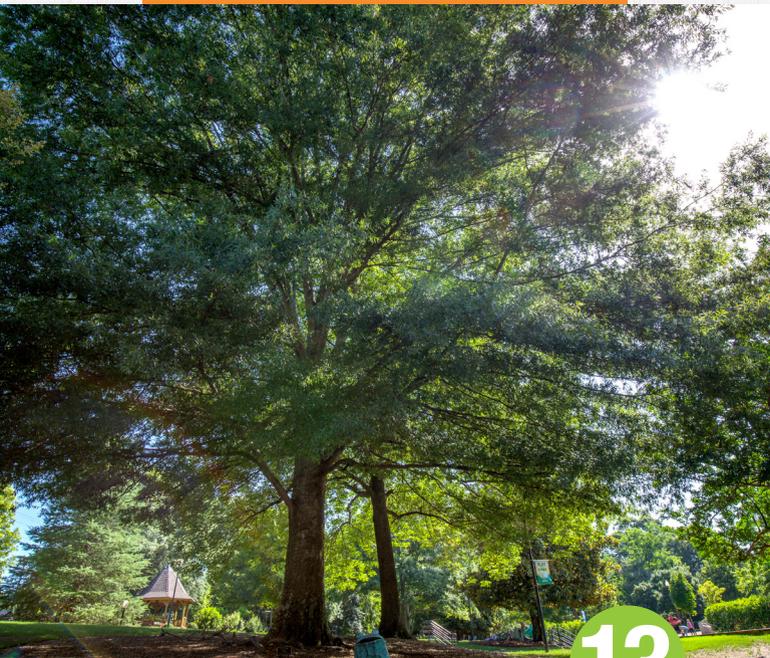
Unfortunately, the green ash is being threatened by the emerald ash borer, a beetle introduced accidentally from Asia and to which it has no natural resistance.



12

12 CRAPE MYRTLE

The Crape Myrtle is a native of Southeast Asia and was first introduced circa 1790 to the U.S via Charleston, S.C. by French botanist Andre Michaux. It is chiefly recognized for its profuse and colorful flowers – in fact the Crape Myrtle is often referred to as the “lilac of the South.” Because of its great landscape value, it has been hybridized into hundreds of varieties covering a wide range of colors. This most common colorful cityscape plant seen throughout the U.S. is considered one of the most versatile and prolific ornamental landscape plants, so much so that it has taken on the status of a native plant.



13

13 WILLOW OAK

The Willow Oak is a member of the mighty oak family and is often referred to as a “handsome” tree. It has a stand-out feature of willow-like leaves. The spear-shaped leaves appear in the spring with a light/bright green color, become dark green in the summer, and turn shades of yellow bronze-orange and red in the autumn. Native to North America, the Willow Oak is a favorite selection for street trees because of its ability to survive in an urban environment. It is frequently planted along streets and in parks and golf courses because of its size, striking appearance, and relatively fast growth. The tree’s leaves have the ability to remove toxins from the air, which also makes it highly desirable in cities. It is a totally pest-free tree that can grow to 100 feet tall. It takes 15 years to start dropping a prolific production of acorns, which are a major food source for wildlife in the forests.

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CHECK OUT THE AUDIO TOUR

An audio tour is available at
norcrosstours.com/trees

Click each tree name to find the
audio description of that tree.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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