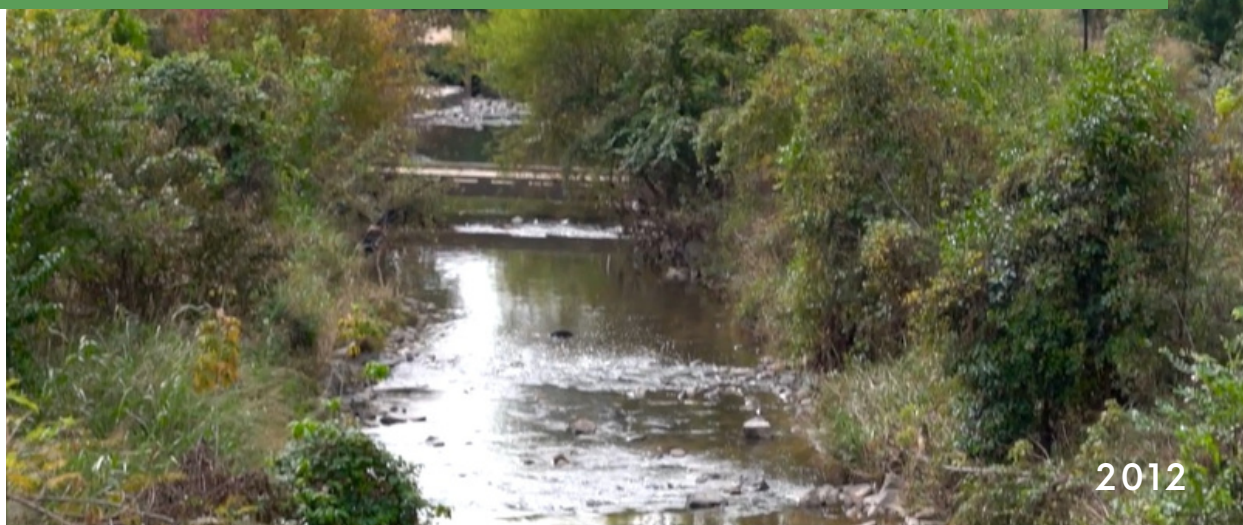


2000



THEN &
NOW

LITTLE SUGAR CREEK GREENING
CHARLOTTE, NC
2021 LEGACY TREE FUND GRANT



2012

THEN:

Unlike other large cities that sit on rivers or seas, Charlotte, N.C., is located on a system of small streams and creeks. Little Sugar Creek is the city's most prominent. Unfortunately, Little Sugar Creek became a polluted, dangerous eyesore weaving through urban, suburban, and rural areas of Charlotte. In the 1950s, the city even built a concrete parking lot over a huge portion of the creek to hide it away.

In 2005, after decades of research and proposals, a \$42 million state-local-private restoration project began and the most polluted waterway in North Carolina became an amenity. Along with uncovering and restoring the creek, water-quality improvements such as meanders, riffles, rain gardens, natural plantings, and a 16-mile greenway were added. The greenway provides both human recreation and wildlife habitat, and its location alongside Little Sugar Creek also helps improve water quality and help control flooding. However, parts of the Little Sugar Creek Greenway were developed by cutting large swaths of urban forest away, resulting in big patches of grass and hot asphalt.

In 2021, TreesCharlotte – a group of citizens concerned about and committed to growing the city's urban forest – applied for, and received, a North Carolina Urban Forest Council (NCUFC) Legacy Tree Fund grant for Little Sugar Creek greening.

"As Charlotte's boom continues, protecting and planting trees is critical to mitigating storm-water runoff, keeping our drinking water healthy, and scrubbing our air clean," said TreesCharlotte Business Director Heike Biller. "Focusing projects on parks also creates a healthier environment in places that are open to all. The greenways are a true representation of Charlotte's rich diversity and planting trees along them fulfills TreesCharlotte's mission of tree equity."



NOW:

In the fall of 2021, TreesCharlotte and approximately 50 volunteers from local neighborhoods and businesses came together to plant trees along the Little Sugar Creek Greenway. TreesCharlotte led a planting demonstration to educate volunteers before everyone headed out to plant 57 trees.

The planting included a mix of 7-gallon trees that were large-, medium- and small-maturing species to restore the urban forest and provide shade along the greenway.

"This Legacy Tree Fund award helped TreeCharlotte achieve a small part of their larger goal to preserve and grow Charlotte's tree canopy to 50% coverage by 2050," said NCUFC Executive Director Leslie Moorman. "We're proud to help TreesCharlotte protect the health and well-being of Charlotte residents."

Each year, the North Carolina Urban Forest Council awards Legacy Tree Fund grants to community groups, civic associations, block clubs, garden clubs, and other non-profit organizations for urban forestry projects involving tree planting. Since 2011 The Legacy Tree Fund has helped plant thousands of trees in communities across North Carolina. Visit <https://www.ncufc.org/Legacy-Tree-Fund.php> to donate to or apply for a grant.