

GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

Delta College's one square mile of campus grounds stretch across 148 acres of maintained mowed grass and planted beds, nearly 61 developed acres, and 436 undeveloped natural acres of trees and fields. Within the square mile of Delta College property lie approximately 218.3 acres of land rented for crop production. Grounds Management employs a wide range of sustainable practices.



MASTER PLANNING

In 2002/03, Delta College, in collaboration with JJR LLC, embarked on a landscape master plan intended to provide a solid landscape development framework from which the college can implement site projects in a coordinated manner. The master plan addresses:

- Strengthening and expanding agriculture and forested lands
- Developing a complete loop road
- Relocating and expanding athletic areas
- Modifying the entry, parking, & pedestrian areas
- Reinforcing central axis and courtyards
- Developing clear levels of maintenance
- Integrating the historical farmstead
- Integrating native landscapes into contemporary environments

The Landscape Master Plan suggests a reallocation of resources aimed at reducing the overall amount of mowed lawn. This will allow for the focus of landscape treatment and maintenance resources to the detailed campus core, rather than allocating precious resources to maintain large lawn areas on the periphery.

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

The College's Ground Maintenance staff sees to it that Delta's defining color reaches beyond the building and into the outdoor space. The staff has increasingly incorporated natural products and processes to maintain our lawns, courtyards, trees, and foliage.

Nearly 800 new trees have been planted since embarking on the Landscape Master Plan. Many areas that were formerly mowed lawn have been converted to no-mow or low-mow biannual groundcover. The result was a reduction in the use of lawn mowers and fertilizer application and, thus, a reduction in fuel consumption and air pollution.

Fallen leaves and grass clippings are mulched back into soil to provide up to 25% of the lawn fertilization needs. Excess clippings are compost-piled to serve indirectly as a food source for the bacteria in the soil during the decomposition process. The composted material is later returned as humus to landscaped beds to further provide healthy turf such as decomposing thatch.

Campus shrub trimmings and tree limbs are ground through a chipper to produce valuable plant material. The fine, even textured organic material, which will eventually compost naturally, is used in a variety of ways to enhance the campus landscape.

About 18.41 acres of campus grounds area are irrigated. Water is supplied by the City of Saginaw and used only in amounts to supplement natural rainfall. Irrigation water use decreased by approximately 10% from FY07 to FY08 due to better established turf and more mature plants.

www.delta.edu/sustainability

Delta College...Where our Color Will Always Be Green!