



Advisory Group Workshop #3 Summary & Emerging Themes

Thursday, July 18, 2024, 3-5 pm
LouisvilleTreePlan.org

Meeting Summary

On July 18, 2024, the Louisville Urban Forest Master Plan Advisory Group (AG) convened for its third and final workshop to discuss the plan, known statistics and characteristics of Louisville's urban forest, and community goals and priorities. Sixty-four (64) people attended the workshop, held at the South Central Regional Library. A list of the AG members in attendance is included at the end of this report.

These workshops are designed as a forum for the community to collectively explore current conditions in Louisville, and start to identify challenges and solutions to the most pressing issues. In other words, the workshops provide a method for the community at-large to self-evaluate the sustainability of Louisville's urban forest.

This workshop focused on the Management Approach, primarily related to city operations and care of the urban forest. A 20-minute presentation covered a recap of the last workshop on The Players, and an explanation of the indicators related to this workshop's topic: The Management Approach. Much like the first workshop, the performance level in each indicator was determined ahead of time based on quantitative data (unlike the second workshop on the Players, in which the findings were more qualitative and subjective). Scoring was based on Metro management, though the discussion acknowledged the need for management across all land types. The remaining 90 minutes were used for two additional discussions.

The Management Approach results were scored, thus completing the scoring of the indicators of a sustainable urban forest for Louisville, as shown below.

LOUISVILLE (KY) Indicators of a Sustainable Urban Forest			Assessed Score			
			Low	Mod.	Good	
The Trees	Urban Tree Canopy Cover					
	Equitable Distribution					
	Streets & Parks <i>(public, landscape)</i>	Age/Size Distribution		<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Condition		<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Diversity / Pest Vulnerability		<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Suitability - Overhead		<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Suitability - Ground Level		<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Suitability - Soil Conditions		<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Suitability - Invasives		<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Suitability - Climate Adaptability		<i>incomplete data</i>		
	Natural Areas / Woodlands <i>(public or private)</i>	Age/Size Distribution		<i>no data</i>		
		Condition		<i>no data</i>		
		Diversity / Pest Vulnerability		<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Overhead		<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Ground Level		<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Soil Conditions		<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Invasives		<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Climate Adaptability		<i>no data</i>		
	All Other Lands <i>(primarily private)</i>	Age/Size Distribution		<i>no data</i>		
		Condition		<i>no data</i>		
		Diversity / Pest Vulnerability		<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Overhead		<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Ground Level		<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Soil Conditions		<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Invasives		<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Climate Adaptability		<i>no data</i>		
	The Players <i>(with AG Voting Results)</i>	Neighborhood Action		17	37	0
Large Landholder Involvement		36	16	0		
Green Industry Involvement		11	37	3		
City Department/Agency Cooperation		30	20	1		
Funder Engagement		12	34	4		
Utility Engagement		29.5	21.5	1		
Developer Engagement		34	18	0		
Public Awareness		35.5	15.5	0		
Regional Collaboration		37	14	0		
The Mgmt Approach	Tree Inventory					
	Canopy Assessment					
	Management Plan					
	Risk Management Program					
	Maintenance of Publicly-Owned Trees					
	Planting Program					
	Tree Protection Policy					
	Invasive Species Management					
	City Staffing and Equipment					
	Funding					
	Disaster Preparedness & Response					
	Communications					
Totals			35 74%	10 21%	1 2%	

Group Discussions and Emerging Themes

After the initial presentation, the AG broke into small groups for discussion. Each breakout group had 6-8 people, including a pre-arranged facilitator from the UFMP project team. In a set amount of time each small group explored two topics introduced by Rachel, and reported back to the larger group their priorities. Detailed notes on each small group conversation were taken and handed in at the conclusion of the meeting.

For ease of consumption and understanding, the notes from each discussion group were combined into themes heard. This summary of themes that emerged is found in the following pages. A full listing of all raw notes from each group can be found in a separate document.

Discussion #1: UF Management Practices Throughout Louisville

QUESTION PROPOSED FOR FIRST BREAKOUT DISCUSSION: We just heard about urban forestry management practices in general, and what Louisville Metro specifically is doing in its ongoing operations. But the Metro manages a small part of the urban forest. What about the rest of Louisville? How do we apply these ideas to the rest of the urban forest and all the players that care for different parts of the urban forest? Are there concepts the players and community should focus on?

While this was a big question to have each group discuss, a number of themes emerged. Discussions and notes revealed the following emerging themes and sample comments received related to management needs:

Central Entity / Coordination. Again the need for a more coordinated effort emerged. Sample comments:

- Call for more leadership and more holistic management/communication between entities
- Overarching group that organizes roles/responsibilities so it's better coordinated without duplications
- Central entity requesting participation, more inclusive of League of Cities/HOAs/Neighborhood Associations - forestry extension office for different areas
- Merging community forester programs
- Agencies' efforts are overlapping. Roles and responsibility lines are blurred. Clarify so we're making sure everything is convened and not duplicated or missed. Agencies are investing thinking siloed - need to broaden view and take full picture into account

Full Community Engagement Needed. This work will take all of us to make happen. Sample comments:

- Hard to have conversations b/c of city segregation - create better conversations?
- Comprehensive mindset change; peership among inner and outer old city limits.

- Use League of Cities as a stakeholder meeting organization for consensus with all 80 cities.

Trees in Development. Improvements are needed regarding trees in development situations.

Sample comments:

- Better enforcement of existing regulations
- Need more greenspace development
- Larger spaces for trees to survive
- Enforce parking lots to have trees
- Education of public/developers/etc on value of trees, code requirements, maintenance, invasives, etc.

More Outreach and Education. Again, the need for education and awareness emerged. Sample comments:

- Education for small and large property owners - benefits beyond beautification and potential damage
- Many people see trees as a liability - requires education on perspective, etc. shift before planting efforts.
- Help maintain together, help people get invested, trees are infrastructure - needs to be known
- Training for utilities and private development

Wood ReUse. There is an opportunity to find a way to reuse wood as care and removals happen.

Sample comments:

- Management of city/regional wood waste - economic loss - could be going to maintenance
- How capture wood waste to turn into value that pays for maintenance, creates jobs/entrepreneurial - urban wood utilization, mulch

Funding. Work will require funding, with multiple ideas given. Sample comments:

- Leverage dedicated revenue streams already in place with HOAs and business park CAM fees for organized landlords subdivisions, and business parks.
- More funding for nonprofits
- Funding ideas - soda tax, linear ft. tax, one-time tax. Also a round-up program at stores?
- Enforcing fines for tree loss
- Preventative maintenance w/ budget for labor and planting trees. Ex: MSD just raised rates. Can that be allocated for tree maintenance?

More Data. A better understanding of the existing trees is needed, with ideas on how to boost collection of that data. Sample comments:

- Need tree inventory for all trees, not just public trees.

- Involving residents in a tree inventory that provides good data. High school students going in community to help gather data (similar to Bellarmine program)

Better Care. The need for better care of existing trees emerged again. Sample comments:

- Stronger maintenance program - tree storm damage leaves lasting impact/memory
- Cities use contractors more for maintenance
- Individual landowners - empower tree owners to manage

Needs of Large Landowners and Entities. An opportunity for real canopy growth if large landowners were on board. Sample comments:

- Large land owners lack the knowledge for proper management
- Different approach for larger entities (incentives, recognizing tree cities, campuses, etc)

Discussion #2: Setting Urban Forestry Goals

QUESTION PROPOSED TO GROUPS: Quick presentation of different kinds of goals related to urban forestry, with examples from different cities. Groups were tasked with suggesting goals for Louisville's Urban Forest.

Detailed notes on each small group conversation were taken and handed in at the conclusion of the meeting. Discussions and notes revealed the following emerging themes:

Equity. Most discussion groups cited that equity needs to be a major focus and overriding goal. No matter the specific goals of canopy cover or planting or preservation, resources must be put to the areas in highest need first.

Coordination. Most discussion groups also cited the need for better coordination between all the players' efforts, which is a theme that has come up in all three workshops. No matter the specific goals of canopy cover or planting or preservation, work needs to be coordinated better. Some of the comments received:

- Having a proper umbrella organization helping everyone work together
- Cooperation between neighboring communities
- Not just City doing it but full utilization of stakeholders, residents, companies, schools
- Programs that incentivize action (among students, church, volunteers)

Outreach and Education. The idea that the broader Louisville community does not understand the full role of trees in a livable city emerged again. Outreach and education will be needed on an ongoing basis. Some of the comments received:

- People tend to be in a bubble until outreach/education reaches out to educate.
- Organized effort - JCPS tree program in curriculum
- Public education on value of trees - unknown and not measurable

- Private landowner education - JCPS, MSD, UofL - maintenance, planning, etc.
- Changed attitudes towards trees throughout the community
- Education and communication/outreach is so important to all issues, especially environmental and civic issues. Cross pollination between Lou metro and community partners is a vital need.

Walkability. Trees are directly connected to how walkable a neighborhood is by lower heat stress. As this is one of Louisville's goals to better connect neighborhoods for pedestrians and transit options, trees should be included in walkability goals, i.e. 10 minute neighborhoods must be tree shaded walks.

Changing Mentality: Trees as Public Infrastructure. Based on the known roles trees play, and the warming climate, trees must be considered vital public infrastructure (vs. an aesthetic asset). Some of the comments received:

- Trees as infrastructure, public outreach on infrastructure importance
- System - trees as a public good. Needs city-mandated support from agencies, change ordinance for individual responsibility.
- Treat trees like infrastructure. Investigate forming a utility.
- Ensure infrastructure projects prioritize tree plantings in plan from start
- Provide support for homeowner care to shift mindset toward trees as infrastructure and less as a liability
- Changing perception of trees (Metro) to neighbor trees are related to our health

Better Care. Current care practices by Metro are not creating an equitable canopy in Louisville. Some of the comments received:

- If we plan to look at trees as infrastructure we should fund the maintenance. I think community perception would improve greatly.
- Maintenance that is on-going to sustain beyond the grant
- Prioritize maintenance - short term shift in funding/resources
- Lift the burden off private property owners in areas where the greatest need for tree benefits are needed
- I am surprised how convoluted the County is in terms of tree maintenance and responsibility. It will need to be much more cohesive

Canopy Cover Numbers. Multiple specific canopy goals were suggested. Some of the comments received:

- Net zero loss (x4). True "no net loss" of tree canopy would be good for the community
- Obtainable goals by neighborhoods (x2). Every neighborhood having goals for tree canopy vs across the entire city.
- Bringing up city wide tree canopy to 40-45%
- Equity based canopy coverage - aim for areas in the most need (x4).

- “40% in J-40 by 2040”
- Maintain OG (40%) canopy goal - prioritize J-40 areas to get to 40%
- Increase by district - canopy percent goals, create competition/incentive support legislation that low canopy districts receive more funding.
- 3-30-300 goal - where all neighborhoods benefit individually

Work at Local Level. Many comments received suggested the need to do this work at the local level. Some of the comments received:

- Downtown changes/beautification/empty lots
- Engagement on local level - communities talking to communities - give communities space to make own decisions
- Every neighborhood having goals for tree canopy vs across the entire city.

Increase Quality. The quality of the existing trees is important as well, both in what trees are in place, but also their condition and health. Some of the comments received:

- Better care of existing trees will improve community perception greatly.
- Natives planted as a priority - benefit native wildlife/communities
- More cluster tree areas like microforest

Create Space. Work will be needed to make space for trees, especially in the areas that need it the most. Some of the comments received:

- Design infrastructure to accommodate large growth trees - designing with pervious pavement
- Include trees in street redos

Put People to Work. There is a real opportunity in the implementation of this plan to develop skills of the local workforce. Some of the comments/topics heard:

- Utilize the second chance program
- Workforce development (working with male incarcerated to reduce recidivism) as part of helping maintenance workforce for maintenance

Plant and Preserve. More planting and care/maintenance are needed in the more urban areas of the County, while preservation of the existing natural environment is a higher priority in the outer parts of the County. Any planting work must factor in multiple years of establishment work, plus ongoing maintenance. Some of the comments/topics heard:

- Incentivize the presence and/or expansion of canopy with reduced stormwater assessment fee (MSD) or reduced property taxes (PVA)
- Any tree planting goals should be based on inequity/lack of canopy
- Ensure planting goals do not outweigh maintenance ability
- Be sure to include preservation efforts in the eastern part of the county. In the outer areas, preservation is more important than planting.

Parting Reminders

A final comment form asked each attendee if they are willing to stay involved, and what kinds of resources or expertise they can bring to implementation. Information was collected and given to TreesLouisville for utilization when implementation begins.

Help spread the word to your networks to provide their input too. Resources for marketing can be found at <https://www.louisvilletreeplan.org/promotions.html>

- Invite Us Over! (available through August) We can come to your next event or group meeting.
- Give Input on website online survey.
- Come to one of our Community Workshops, dates and locations are on the project website.

Advisory Group Members

The following are members that accepted the invitation to the Urban Forest Master Plan Advisory Group. Those that attended this final workshop are marked with an asterisk.

*McCauley Adams, Brown Forman

Vashawn Anderson, Neighborhood Representative - Pleasure Ridge Park **(EC)**

*Kevin Bailey, KY Transportation Cabinet (KYTC)

*Juva Barber, Building Industry of Greater Louisville

*Von Barnes, Neighborhood Representative - Algonquin **(EC)**

*LaDonna Barnett, Neighborhood Representative - Chickasaw **(EC)**

*Jordan Basham, Louisville Water Company

Donald Biddle, University of Louisville - Geographic and Environmental Sciences

Deborah Bilitski, Waterfront Park

*Emily Boone, Greater Louisville Sierra Club

*Jerry Brown, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)

Jeffrey Brown, Louisville Metro Government - Department of Public Works

Ronel Brown, Neighborhood Representative **(EC)**

*Ben Cecil, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)

*Eneitra Beattie, Chickasaw Neighborhood Representative

*Bradley Coomes, Louisville Metro Government - Air Pollution Control District (APCD)

*Carolyn Cromer, Sisters of Nazareth

Jody Dahmer, Beargrass Thunder

Daniel DeCaro, University of Louisville

*Lisa Dettlinger, Louisville Grows

*Katie Doran, Louisville Metro Government - Fleets and Facilities

*Mesude Duyar, Louisville Metro Government - Parks & Recreation

*Barry Edgar, Louisville Metro Government - Urban Forestry
*Jaquelyn Ekland, ISA Certified Arborist
Kristen English, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)
Cheryl Fisher, Rubbertown Community Advisory Council
Rebecca Fleischaker, Louisville Downtown Partnership
Ozzy Gibson, Louisville Metro Government - Parks & Recreation
*Kent Gootee, Mindel Scott (LA)
*Morgan Grubbs, TreesLouisville
*Helen Hacker, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC), GLI
Frank "Peanut" Hall - Neighborhood Representative - California **(EC)**
*Felicia Harper - Kentuckiana Regional Planning & Development Agency (KIPDA)
Tonesha Hearn, Louisville Metro Government - Office for Safe & Healthy Neighborhoods
Patrick Henry - Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)
*Bill Hollander, TreesLouisville
Keelonda Hunter, Neighborhood Representative - Parkland **(EC)**
*Barbara Hurt, Dendrifund
Mike Jackson, Urban League / Kentucky Greens Co.
*Julie James, Filson Club
*Charlotte Jones, Goodwill Industries
Jennifer Judd, Urban Wood Economy
*Jessica Kane, Jefferson Memorial Forest & Natural Areas
*Kate Karl, Louisville Metro Government - Urban Forestry
Jennifer Kern, Louisville Metro Government - Department of Public Works
Mike King, Louisville Metro Government - Department of Public Works
Kathy Knotts, Gheens Foundation
Allison Lloyd, PepsiCo
*Maria Koetter, CoolSeal by GuardTop
Chris Kolb, Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS)
*Charlie Marsh, TreesLouisville / Stephen C Gault Co.
*Kurt Mason
Anthony Mathis, Norton Healthcare
*Lori Mattingly, Angel's Envy
*Bear Miles, TreesLouisville
*Keith Morgan, Neighborhood Representative - Shawnee **(EC)**
Jeff O'Brien, Louisville Metro Government - Economic Development
Chris O'Bryan, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)
*Andrew Owen - Louisville Metro Government - Council Rep. District 9
Brooke Pardue, Parks Alliance of Louisville (PAL)
Prasanthi Persad, Wilderness Louisville
Patrick Piuma, University of Louisville
Michelle Ralkey, Hess Landscape
*Sumedha Rao, Louisville Metro Government - Office of Sustainability
Tee Ray, Bob Ray Co.
Steve Ricketts, Kentucky Solar Energy Society
Lynn Rippy, YouthBuild Louisville
*Lorri Roberts, Brightside, Inc.
Donald Robinson, Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS)
Jan Rogers, Neighborhood Representative **(EC)**

Robert Rogers, Neighborhood Representative - Shawnee **(EC)**
Betsy Ruhe, Louisville Metro Government - Council Rep. District 21
*Sarah Beth Sammons, Booker Design Collaboration
*Jared Smith, Louisville Metro Government - Urban Forestry
Ted Smith, University of Louisville - Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute
Matt Spalding, Olmsted Parks Conservancy
*Leia Staples, Bellarmine University
*Bert Stocker, Floyd's Fork Coalition
*Cindi Sullivan, TreesLouisville
*John Swintosky, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)
Nadereca Thibeaux, Louisville Medical and Education District
Donovan Taylor, Neighborhood Representative - Chickasaw (EC)
*Erin Wagoner, Metro Sewer District (MSD)
*Chris Weidamann, KY Division of Forestry
*Matthew Wiczorek, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC), LG&E
Mary Ellen Wiederwohl, Accelerator for America
*Julia Williams, Louisville Metro Government - Office of Planning & Design Services
Dash Williams, Louisville Metro Government - Office of Sustainability
*Sean Willis, University of Louisville - Urban Design Studio
Liz Winlock, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC), Olmsted Parks Conservancy
*Ray Yeager, University of Louisville / Green Heart
*Mark Zoeller, Louisville Metro Government - Fleets and Facilities