

**Louisville Urban Forest Master Plan
Advisory Group (AG) Workshop #2: The Players
COMPILATION OF RAW COMMENTS RECEIVED**

June 13, 2024

Attendees: 58 total in attendance.

Discussion #1: The Players

Short conversations were had on each individual indicator/player. How is Louisville doing? How can we improve? Raw comments across all breakout groups:

Neighborhood Action

*Overall Score: **Moderate***

Vote: 17 low, 37 moderate, 0 good

Reasons for choosing that level

- Storms - depends on what part of town you live in
- Trees are expensive, and you don't get help. Tough sell.
- Asked "how to kill trees" - I didn't want it start with
- Some neighborhood groups do get it
- Optics - there but no one knows they are there - the groups who promote tree care
- No public announcement seen
- Neighborhoods must communicate - tree hate neighborhood
- Bad talk about trees louder than tree lovers
- Everyone wants trees but people who complain are louder
- Lack of awareness & resources at neighborhood level
- Very highly active groups vs very low groups - two extremes
- Agency is lacking on the low
- No unified set of goals and priorities
- High power leadership is not communicating or oblivious to solution
- Second city arborist
- Pockets of active players
- Varies across neighborhoods but we are moderate
- Public not aware of tree canopy issues
- Siloed into areas of greater economic availability
- Lower public involvement in lower socioeconomic areas
- Lower rates of home ownership, lower priority to non-owners. Transience - lower buy-in
- Residents have greater quality-of-life priorities

- We have a range of engagement levels across neighborhoods from super engaged to not engaged - most are not

How do we get to the next level?

- More awareness - Different programs and resources, free trees, grant as well as awareness of importance
- Be aware of responsibility
- More funding from government - incentives to plant tree
- For low groups need agency and lack of information
- Resource bank
- Create an umbrella system
- Communication with private landowners - next section
- Promoting city of neighborhoods
- Building community
- Making list of contractors
- More public education of what role trees play
- More resources
- More education
- Coordination of several entities across the city

Large Landholders

Overall Score: **Low**

Vote: 36 low, 16 moderate, 0 good

Reasons for choosing that level

- Missed opportunity
- No awareness, not part of plan
- It's a landscape only look, not function, not canopy
- Weed wack - see as cost more \$\$ to keep up
- Wealth status, tidiness to it
- Low for fairground, airport
- Zero planning with private landowners - where is the collaboration?
- MSD no trees in retention basins
- Driven by land management
- Embracing gift not mission
- Some large institutionalized landowners used to have more resources and engagement. Many or most don't now.
- There are also no joint efforts - where large landholders have community-wide goals
- Top-down - do not prioritize canopy preservation, planting enough
- Not incentivized to 'care'
- Good for parklands future fund, nonexistent for KTC/JCPS

How do we get to the next level?

- Include detailed cost savings and benefits - data
- Demonstrating mindset example campuses see in action
- Education awareness
- Land use regulation (cash reason)
- Incentive program
- MSD program - reason highlands has planted so many
- Awareness of program organization advocate at the building process - be louder at that part of the process
- Code and economic systems need repairing
- One platform that holds all education and outreach materials
- Individualized plans
- Have and publicize a master plan
- Incentivize organizations somehow to pitch in
- More education at political level (council, etc)
- Improved policies (LDC, etc)
- Plans need to be readily available

Green Industry Involvement

Overall Score: **Moderate**

Vote: 11 low, 37 moderate, 3 good

Reasons for choosing that level

- People reach out for help versus offering to help
- Not making strides to tree planting, just status quo
- Tree care companies have pushed for better standards
- Have public private partnership
- Arborists are strong partners - limbwalker. They have to earn a living - money - not involved in meeting today.
- I hear about green industry - social media
- Too many short term goals
- Establishing incentives
- Work has been short term to date
- Several groups working together but not in a coordinated way long term
- Many knowledgeable people, but lack capacity to more fully contribute
- Other groups - may have other priorities than just trees (facilities, maintenance, etc)

How do we get to the next level?

- Ask to be more involved
- Ask what they need to be more involved
- Bring nursery role into talk

- Find native - local nurseries need to provide straight natives
- Stay in communication w/follow-up
- Elaborate on plans for projects beyond start and finish
- Closer partnerships and planning
- Have long term plans
- Work together in coordination
- Convening experts/increased opportunity for collaboration
- Advocacy
- Requirements/to do a better job standards
- Define common goals and educate as to why
- Need to have a north star to bring folks together
- Focus on rowing in the same direction

City Department/Agency Cooperation

Overall Score: **Low**

Vote: 30 low, 20 moderate, 1 good

Reasons for choosing that level

- Because trees are a property owner responsibility (which we don't like) this is a problem.
- City agencies generally work together
- Constant change and not serious commitment
- Top heavy
- Development focused
- No common themes
- Low communication amongst departments
- Overlapping projects
- General transition within the organization
- There is too much rigidity
- Need clear mission as to responsibilities
- Conflict between agencies, no coordination, no top-down, only bottom-up
- Departments don't talk to each other
- Conflicting goals - try to plant & org comes trench
- Lot of agencies that do support sustainability
- Not high level of participation from utilities
- Communications between agencies not formal
- Departments operate within silos - policies can conflict. Example: sidewalks - may not require tree wells or consider/prioritize trees as part of a project
- Burden of maintenance responsibilities (financial and labor). Lack of capacity
- Development is dominating conversation
- codes/regs need to be updated and enforced

How do we get to the next level?

- Trees should be a part of planning for big projects
- Addressing management policies
- Cooperation with metro agencies
- Avoid tunnel vision
- All agencies have sit down more times to identify and measure against each other
- Has to be incentive to get all depts to collaborate
- Overarching policy if you have a city project - must include how to protect/preserve/maintain trees. No overarch body
- All touch trees in different ways
- No common goal
- We have a good steps
- Have streetscape then utilities come - start a but don't know about future projects
- Coordination of utilities and nonprofits and city
- Education of city agencies

Funder Engagement

Overall Score: **Moderate**

Vote: 12 low, 34 moderate, 4 good

Reasons for choosing that level

- A few funders are engaged but don't have adequate funding to implement a citywide urban forest master plan
- A lot of short term projects
- Blue ribbon syndrome
- Bovou Fomicu and Angels Envy
- Below the center of the earth to the advance less
- LG&E and MSD are only window dressing
- Lately been interest parks in green space.
- Foundations are aware of value been walking walk not as widespread
- Groups have come from bottom to top
- TreesLou - provided opportunity for funders
- Tree fund - developer pays into for public/private trees
- Louisville coesn't fund compared to other cities. City doesn't fund urban trees
- Bigger team now with UF team
- Large funders in city are environ: aware and helpful. All have environ focus even if not main
- At the city level we're low - lacking adequate funding for the scale of the issue
- Lack funding for long-term maintenance

- Nonprofits are low
- inconsistency

How do we get to the next level?

- Define what the real need is and how much it will cost. That will help determine whether current resources are adequate
- Commitment to long-term projects
- Public health
- Connect to regional community focal point
- Promotion to the public and private sector to highlight the specific needs
- Increase publicity so other entities
- Want to see results - need to show we are seeing good results and need to highlight
- Engage more public funders
- advocacy / public pressure
- Chicken and egg - funders could think differently with master plan
- Education and funders

Utility Engagement

Overall Score: **Low**

Vote: 29.5 low, 21.5 moderate, 1 good

Reasons for choosing that level

- Politics get in the way of utilities
- Development gets in the way
- Money gets in the way - MSD the best
- Each utility has different priorities
- No intrinsic motivation for tree preservation/urban forestry
- Requirements for separation
- Overhead and underground utilities
- Mandatory easement zones reduce space for trees
- When the utility is locally owned it does much better
- There is no coordination, no priority/investment.
- Lip-service
- Many cable and fiber providers are not engaged at all. There is some engagement by most providers
- Give MSD credit for program
- Jaded View - their concern is about money only, haven't seen actual green growth
- I've seen improvement funding from MSD, more program LGE give away trees. LG&E doesn't maintain the line took all green infrastructure out that they put in - MSD

- Nothing good to say about LG&E - right tree, right place, but doesn't promote tree style. Don't want to be a community part
- Not innovative
- LG&E time when no tree could be more than 10 feet tall even if 100 feet away

How do we get to the next level?

- Requirements - place utilities deeper to ensure space for trees
- Coordination
- Showing up
- Go beyond to understand utility duties
- Public responsibility map
- Better collaboration among everyone - property owners, all utilities, local governments, would be helpful
- Have to get them to the table. Hwy won't show up. Won't be engaged because not their mission. They are regulated-political will to force their
- Bury lines, all canopy. That could be that isn't underground lines are too expensive

Developer Engagement

Overall Score: **Low**

Vote: 34 low, 18 moderate, 0 good

Reasons for choosing that level

- Focused on short-term profits
- Quick turnover
- Low intrinsic motivation
- Trees are a last consideration/afterthought in many projects
- Lack of long term maintenance
- Little oversight
- Need push to move everyone forward. Green spaces do add value
- Middling regulations
- Politics and push-backs
- Trees as second thoughts
- Created opposition between economic and environmental
- Varies from developer to developer, of course. But rules in place force some engagement
- We have seen no examples unless forced to preserve or plant large amount of trees
- They want a clean slate - remove every tree
- Cost
- Not stupid mean but mindset do what know

- No incentive to plant trying to cut cost do have them that are not utilized. Money grab take money from us. They want immediate profit.
- Developer community is not creative - in a box. How do you get them excited?

How do we get to the next level?

- Codes & regs
- Education
- Policy change (ie: force them to care)
- If clients care, they will influence outcomes/demand certain standards of developers
- Need more planning on front end
- Stronger enforcement to the ordinance
- Show examples of innovation - show numbers of creative developments
- Land development code required to do more - must have metro council approval
- Tree ordinance got butchered - good document that got watered down. Bad pruning cuts to it
- Educate planning council
- Don't ignore

Public Awareness

Overall Score: **Low**

Vote: 35.5 low, 15.5 moderate, 0 good

Reasons for choosing that level

- Understand the benefits for the most part, but lots of Nimby-ism
- Incremental improvements seen (anecdotally) but LOTS of ground to cover
- NIMBY mentality
- We take it for granted
- Societal changes
- Correlation with neighborhood and awareness
- People moving from place to place have less interest in trees that will take a long time
- People interact with storms - trees nuisance. My sphere - Yay, trees! But general public has lots of skepticism
- Depends on the person, and the community in. Depends on age too.
- Interact with people who don't want - property, business - expensive.
- Very negative being in enforcement

How do we get to the next level?

- We can't rely on the least of us to maintain
- Education - benefits at individual neighborhood level
- Better resources for maintenance so public perceives trees as safe and good

- Need massive prohealth education to encourage cultural change
- Interaction campaign
- Arboretum showcase
- Sharing more data collecting
- More education on benefits, focusing in part on the individual benefits of trees
- lower utility costs from shaded house, more example
- Education - about benefits. Show how big trees do so much more. It's an investment. Teach about native vs invasive or decorative
- Lowes and home depot carry trees that are important
- Subsidize and incentivize right of way trees that are their responsibility - huge cost to remove
- Data - hammer down, put numbers in front of people. Make data relatable. Tell stories.

Regional Collaboration

Overall Score: **Low**

Vote: 37 low, 14 moderate, 0 good

Reasons for choosing that level

- There is virtually no collaboration across regions
- Interests of Jefferson Co differ from more suburban/rural counties
- KWA, Water - moderate with much room for improvement
- No cohesive plan, no coordination. Louisville Island State Legislature
- Not enough collaboration among counties or even among cities in Jefferson county - land development tree regulations vary even among those cities
- Good programs out there - giveaways. People need to know about the stuff out there.
- Awareness and participation is mixed/different across the region
- KYTC doesn't replant and doesn't plant at all
- They do erosion control
- League of Cities - are we collaborating?
- Good partnerships but collabs could be better
- How to jack of communication

How do we get to the next level?

- More communication/unified efforts
- Driving force
- Funding
- Nonprofits are the binding influence
- Inroads along roadways
- Leveraging federal funding
- Get regional leadership involved with smaller entities

- Getting engagement on the master plan so everyone is on board
- Coordinate better with regional agency
- Communication
- Top down priority
- KYTC complete streets could make a difference
- must consider trees safety measure - nucleating policy possibly

Discussion #2: Centralization and Leadership

- Tree Advisory Commission - could be a basis for
- If we have a plan written up, it can be a living document online as a guiding star for resources, parameters, rules
- Need community to believe hard-to-believe government is the right person
- Top Down Effort? Is it Michelle, parks? Has resources, but when you think about regional it's hard to know
- Formalize partnerships, establish communication lines
 - We have an umbrella in metro, but how to coordinate w/ other entities
- Look to other cities as models
- Statewide committee - build with multiple - maybe not state but how do you comply?
- Phases: local and state levels, implement within each city - data gathering
- Has a Zar-top person gathers info "shares" - feeds up to person, business
- Command and control or partnership. City budget and develop how to bridge the gap. Don't dictate what has to be - contribute more so how to get there
- Greater Louisville inc- encourage city competition - we need mayor and head of large entities and leadership and funders - all on board to listen.
- Numbers here is why it's bad for Louisville everyone on Board Public Health campaigns - edu, awareness, funding grassroots
- Better to push mayor see things that bubble up
- People holding power and information: TL acting as Zar (czar?) currently. Look at all organizations, not all players are engaged. Do all organizations know our goal of canopy?
- If there is a real desire to move this forward it needs to come from government. That's the only entity that has the ability to be an effective umbrella. Needs to have an elevated role in Metro
- Tree Advisory Commission has no authority
- UFMP needs to set out areas of greatest need and set goals. Metro needs to make commitment to meet goals, including urban forestry staff for central coordination - and funding. Master Plan needs to make the argument that this will pay dividends in the future. Work will eventually pay for itself.

- The mayor needs to identify appropriate leaders (stakeholders) to keep things going
- Make trees an Early Adaption over Final
- Urban Planning needs to speak with urban forestry
- Movement of coordinating people who are passionate on urban forestry
- Re-entry programs - utilize
- Bring in more people
- Establish a plan that can be used and applied to all involved parties
- Create a clear avenue of communication for everyone
- Separate elected officials and a voluntary rotating board representative
- Develop a Master Tree Plan that is adopted by the City Leadership - Mayor's Office and City Council. There has to be teeth in terms of regulation and commitment
- Accountability ensures long term success part dedicated revenue stream
- Gran north involvement (and education) to support centralized initiatives. Community engagement.
- Long term success to become part of the fabric
- Need for a centralized entity/agencies (Who manages?) - consistency in ownership, maintenance, etc.
- Unify similar efforts among different organizations - education, data, advocacy
- Leadership ("Department of Trees") overseeing and delegating. Ex Division of Urban Forestry - public
- 'Trees executive (advisory) committee' to facilitate greater communication between entities
- Info hotline for the public
- Simplify the legislation/jurisdictions (ex: trees along state vs local roads)
- Goal should be to have benchmarks/accountability
- White oak initiative
- Modify based on real time issues
- Measurable outcome - consistent
- Marketing
- Find other cities doing this well
- Central Entity - not government(?) Community Foundation(?)