

**Louisville Urban Forest Master Plan**  
**Advisory Group (AG) Workshop #3: The Management Approach**  
**COMPILATION OF RAW COMMENTS RECEIVED**

July 18, 2024

**Attendees:** Total 64 total in attendance. Raw comments are recorded below from small group facilitators and larger group discussions.

## Discussion 1: Management Beyond City Operations

- **Central Entity / Coordination**

- Central entity requesting participation, more inclusive of League of Cities/HOAs/Neighborhood Associations - forestry extension office for different areas
- Communication between utilities and urban forestry - highways
- Have a unified tree selection list for Louisville Metro that is adopted or endorsed by development code, KYTC, urban forestry, all the non-profits (Yew Dell, Waterfront Botanical, GreenHeart, Louisville Grows, Olmsted Conservancy, etc) so that all private and public entities are planting off the same list
- Tap more influential community members. Ex: JCPS superintendent rather than individual schools
- Call for more leadership and more holistic management/communication between entities
- Merging community forester programs
- Agencies efforts are overlapping
  - Roles and responsibilities 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
- Overarching group that organizes roles/responsibilities so it's better coordinated without duplications

- **Full Community Engagement Needed**

- League of Cities as stakeholder meetings organization for consensus with all 50 cities
- Comprehensive mindset change; peership among inner and outer old city limits
- Need to know what all municipalities know about their trees and what rules are in their cities. Obviously can't do this for all 80 but the largest ones should be listed in the report.
- Engage home-rule cities and neighborhood groups

- Organizations outside the city - stake in urban forestry, outside of maintenance (storm water)
  - Private Landowners and other entities than Metro to buy into plan
  - Private property bucket
  - Hard to have conversations b/c of city segregation - create better conversations?
  - LGE - need to replant - play by own rules. Need to have a plan, not just an afterthought
  - MSD - play by own rules
- **In Development**
    - Enforcement of LDC & Ordinances - communication to proper channels
    - Education of public/developers/etc on value of trees, code requirements, maintenance, invasives, etc.
    - More development engagement
    - need more green space development
    - Larger spaces for trees to survive
    - Enforce parking lots to have trees
    - Wrong development order of operations, lack of education
    - Work with national builders association
- **More Outreach and Education**
    - Education for small property owners - benefits beyond beautification and potential damage
    - Communicate effectively to HOAs and neighborhoods and develop involved enforcement
    - Many people see trees as a liability - requires education on perspective, etc. shift before planting efforts.
    - Plans goals on what we plant should be shared with all private property owners
    - Help maintain together, help people get invested, trees are infrastructure - needs to be known
    - More trainings from state level to help with disaster response - no funding
    - People don't plant/maintain correctly. Plant the wrong trees. How to work with tree service people
    - 1. Education, 2. Training for utilities and private development, 3. Storm management
- **Wood Reutilization**
    - 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**
  - Leverage dedicated revenue streams already in place with HOAs and business park CAM fees for organized landlords subdivisions, and business parks.
  - More funding for nonprofit
  - Funding - soda tax, linear ft. tax, one-time tax . . . round-up program at stores?
  - Enforcing fines for tree
  - Fund - preventative maintenance w/ budget for labor and planting trees. Ex: MSD just raised rates . . . can that be allocated for tree maintenance?
- **Data**
  - 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**
  - Cities use contractors more for maintenance
  - Individual landowners - empower tree owners to manage
  - Stronger maintenance program - tree storm damage leaves lasting impact/memory
- **Large landowners or entities**
  - Large land owners lack the knowledge for proper management
    - Comment on expanding funding to align with management plans
    - This could expand to schools and publicly held land
  - Different approach for larger entities (incentives, recognizing tree cities, campuses, etc)
    - Different approach than at individual/neighborhood level
    - Similar to a cool roof program, solar program ...
    - Target messaging to different respective audiences
  - Big companies - LG&E, APCD, MSD - build/spend \$ on big projects reducing stormwater basin/ trees can help
- **Other**
  - Other government agencies need inventories and plans for trees on their property, Think about benefits of trees on private property and potentially give them benefits based on tree coverage - stormwater benefits being rewarded

- Shifting cost - upfront investment of trees - help in the future - hard to tell that story
- Hard to get players to think proactively - bury power lines

## Discussion 2: Urban Forest Goals

- Coordination
  - Cooperation between neighboring communities
  - Not just city doing it but full utilization of stakeholders, residents, companies, andro just like schools
  - Programs that incentivize action (among students, church, volunteers)
  - Having a proper umbrella organization helping everyone work together
  - 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. I feel like Lou Metro does not do a great job of education itself on what the needs of the county/city are and what needs to be done. I think that speaks volumes more to the mindset of the citizens. People tend to be in a bubble until outreach/education reaches out to educate.
- Equity
  - Equity #1
  - Equity first
  - Equity needs to be overriding goal
  - Focus on equity
  - Areas with potential decline are prioritized
  - Having adjacent owner being responsible hurts equity goal but changing who is responsible requires funds
- Education
  - Organized effort - JCPS tree program in curriculum
  - Public education on value of trees - unknown and not measurable
  - Neighborhood walks
  - Private landowner education - JCPS, MSD, UofL - maintenance, planning, etc.
  - Changed attitudes towards trees throughout the community
  - Big community buy-in
    - Outreach and education
    - Incentivized!
  - Educating new homeowners about planning for trees - realtors, info as part of seller's disclosure
  - Education and outreach is important
  - Who's our primary audience? What is our story? What goals do we need to sell our story? To the city/outside the city

- Schools/education - bringing green spaces to schools and have 4-H like programming to teach students importance and care of trees
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- Walkability
  - Improve walkability of neighborhoods - shaded, green
  - 10-min walk
  - 10 minute walk - Charlotte goal with master tree plan . . . any within 10 min walk of shaded area
  - 10-min walk seems like the average Louisvilian can comprehend. I like that as a goal.
- Understanding/Mentality
  - Trees as infrastructure, public outreach on infrastructure importance
  - System - trees as a public good!
    - City mandated support from agencies
    - Change ordinance for individual responsibility
    - Who at the end of the day makes decisions? Who is the audience?
  - Treat trees like infrastructure. Investigate forming a utility?
  - Infrastructure projects prioritize tree plantings in plan from jump
  - Provide support for homeowners to care for trees - shifting mindset toward trees as infrastructure and less as a liability
  - Changing perception of trees - metro - to neighbor trees are related to our health
- Maintenance
  - If we plan to look at trees as infrastructure we should fund the maintenance. I think community perception would improve greatly.
  - Metro care 100% on street trees and metro has better enforcement/resources for city ordinances
  - System - trees as a public good! City mandated support from agencies. Change ordinance for individual responsibility.
  - 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
  - Equity, less \$ for lower income, more for higher income
  - Free maintenance for most needed, most need first

- Get management plan with inventory
- I am surprised how convoluted the County is in terms of tree maintenance and responsibility. It will need to be much more cohesive
- Canopy Numbers
  - Net zero loss (4). True “no net loss” of tree canopy would be good for the community
  - Bringing up city wide tree canopy to 40-45%
  - Equity based canopy coverage - aim for areas in the most need
  - “40% in J-40 by 2040”
  - Maintain OG (40%) canopy goal - prioritize J-40 areas to get to 40%
  - Mitigation of standard deviation 39% as whole
  - Increase by district - canopy percent goals, create competition/incentive support legislation that low canopy districts receive more funding
  - Obtainable goals by neighborhoods (2)
    - Every neighborhood having goals for tree canopy vs across the entire cit
  - 3-30-300 goal - where all neighborhoods benefit individually
- By Small Scale
  - Downtown changes/beautification/empty lots
  - Engagement on local level - communities talking to communities - give communities space to make own decisions
- Canopy Quality
  - Natives planted as a priority - benefit native wildlife/communities
  - More cluster tree areas like microforest
- Workforce Development
  - Utilize the second chance program
  - Workforce development (working with male incarcerated to reduce recidivism) as part of helping maintenance workforce for maintenance
- Creating Space
  - Design infrastructure to accommodate large growth trees - designing with pervious pavement
- Preservation / Planting
  - Incentivize the presence and/or expansion of canopy
    - Reduced stormwater assessment fee (MSD)
    - Reduced property taxes (PVA)
  - Tree planting goal states achieving 40% canopy coverage by 2029 - distribute based on inequity/lack of canopy
  - Planting - Higher for lower canopy areas, Not have planting goals outweigh maintenance goals, Most need first
  - Inside the beltway - emphasis! Little discussion of the eastern part of the county. Preservation is more important than planting. Trunk diameter (DBH) is a better indicator of forest/woodland health and benefits; aerial assessment gives false

conclusions. Land development regulations need to be different for heavily wooded areas in eastern Jefferson County around Floyds Fork.

- Other
  - Consider alignment with priorities in economic development/other major public planning documents.
  - Achieving a “green area ratio” requirement (canopy:impervious surfaces)
  - Repeat UTC assessment every 5-7 years
  - Define what we call a greenspace; 50% development greenspace endowed before build
  - Consistent mechanism/regularly funded for assessment and goals
  - Eliminate codified parking/grow public transit
  - 30 year trees in CBD
  - Programs to help people replace trees would help
  - Calculating the benefits of (well maintained) trees (stormwater management, insurance costs, etc) can help convince people that additional tree investments are good.
  - Forward looking - 20-30 years, what do we need?
  - More incentives to plant/replace massive trees

## Final Thoughts / Reactions (turned in comment form)

For topics that didn't make it to discussion, or required extra follow-up, we provided an open comment form. Additional feedback requested included reactions to today's and past Louisville Forestry data, as well as ways to be involved in the future progress of this project.

- Great gathering of a diverse group of individuals
- Most surprising: homeowners responsible for caring for street trees, only \$60,000 for equipment and storm response (96% of funding is for salaries).
- Super well organized. It seemed many of the observations were obvious. So little emphasis on (wood) utilization.
- The % of UF funding for staff v. maintenance
- Easement trees under the homeowner. Ordinance education.
- Will the grant funding follow the same example of 96% labor, or will it be used for equipment needs? If we plan to look at trees as infrastructure we should fund the maintenance. I think community perception would improve greatly.
- Need more time
- Inside the beltway - emphasis! Little discussion of the eastern part of the county. Preservation is more important than planting. Trunk diameter (DBH) is a better indicator of forest/woodland health and benefits; aerial assessment gives false conclusions. Land development regulations need to be different for heavily wooded areas in eastern Jefferson County around Floyds Fork.

- Lift the burden off private property owners in areas where the greatest need for tree benefits are needed
- Disaster preparedness is not something I had considered, but seems absolutely critical considering climate change.
- 311 & Accella talking to each other is a problem enterprise-wide in Metro and I hope it can be resolved one day! It would solve so many problems!
- Definitely surprises, the data is important and continuation of collecting efforts can't stop
- Final LMFP needs strong community leadership to drive LMFP. Recruitment should be a priority.
- I believe this assessment presents the information as I expected. I am so thankful to TreesLou for pushing the UFMP work forward and I look forward to seeing the next steps and a robust plan moving forward.
- Interesting learning about peer cities.
- I am surprised how convoluted the County is in terms of tree maintenance and responsibility. It will need to be much more cohesive
- Regarding "The Players" implying that the developer community is "low" is an incorrect assessment. Developers are required to submit development plans that include a landscaping plan - with specific tree canopy requirements. This canopy requirement includes preservation - as well as planting new trees. As I have mentioned, the development community plants more trees than anyone - and we are required to maintain these trees while we manage the HOA. After the HOA becomes self-sustainable - they are required to maintain the trees. This same long term management and participation does not exist outside of these HOA and newly developed areas. We are also always actively engaged in tree issues - unfortunately, often tree people do not like our participation
- 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. I feel like Lou Metro does not do a great job of education itself on what the needs of the county/city are and what needs to be done. I think that speaks volumes more to the mindset of the citizens. People tend to be in a bubble until outreach/education reaches out to educate.