Tree Management Plans

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What is the **purpose** of a tree management plan?
Understand needs, and more efficiently schedule and accurately budget for tree care, planting, and other related tasks

- Reliable data
- Population characteristics
- An understanding of the needs of the community and forest
Attain money to maintain and plant trees and perform other related tasks

- Reliable data
- Population characteristics
- An understanding of the needs of the community and forest
- Workload and budget projections
Plans are pretty important!

They increase knowledge and efficiency, and can help you justify funds and even acquire money to implement and support your program.
So, did you ever hear someone say....

**I wish** I had a plan but I don’t have the money

**I don’t** have a plan so I can’t get money

I only have limited funds and **I can’t** afford to spend what I have on a plan
Selling it.

Maitland, FL  Urban Forester
Knoxville, TN  Director of Public Works
Milton, GA  Planner
How to get a plan for your urban forest

- Persuade decision makers that you need a plan. That means selling it.

- Once you sell it, you need to ensure the plan you specified is right the right plan for your city.

- What is the right plan for your city? One that has baseline data relevant to your situation and has the information/sections you need to get more money, staff, equipment, etc. for your program.
- Have an urban forester and a municipal tree management program

- 2007: Received a FL DOF/USDA Forest Service UC&F grant for an inventory, software and plan

- 2007: RFP

- 2008: Completed the inventory, acquired tree management software, and received a tree management plan
Maitland’s Plan

- Complete tree inventory (trees & planting sites)
- Software/training
- Management plan

- Population characteristics
- Maintenance needs
- Infrastructure conflicts

- Discussed concerns with inventory data
- Prioritized maintenance by assessed risk
- Estimated budgets for known work
- Provided informational appendices and raw data
### FY 2008
- $146,000 for 340 tasks
  - Priority Removals
  - Priority Prunes
  - Tree Planting

### FY 2009
- $198,000 for 580 tasks
  - Priority Removals
  - Priority Prunes
  - Tree Planting

### FY 2010
- $167,000 for 1,430 tasks
  - Routine Pruning Cycle
  - Structural Pruning Cycle
  - Tree Planting
  - Some Lower Priority Removals and Prunes

### FY 2011
- $100,000 for 1,040 tasks
  - Routine Pruning Cycle
  - Structural Pruning Cycle
  - Tree Planting

### FY 2012
- $100,000 for 1,040 tasks
  - Routine Pruning Cycle
  - Structural Pruning Cycle
  - Tree Planting

**Findings.** More funds were needed to complete reactive maintenance and begin cyclic pruning.

**Results.** The received more funds and completed the maintenance. They are considering a complete update.

**Concerns.** Council took budget literally and additional funds for unplanned work was difficult to get. Also information relevant to other departments was lacking.
No urban forester, no real maintenance program, no amountable money except for leaf pick up and reactionary tree maintenance, and tree planting mostly via TN DOF/USDA FS grants.

2009/10: DPW asked for help.

2009/10: DPW provided information to Council about the benefits of trees and a tree management program.

2009/10: DPW SOLD the benefits to Council. (general fund, TN DOF/USDA FS grant, and KUB support).

2010: RFP

2011: Completed inventory and received a master plan for trees.
Knoxville’s Plan

- Targeted inventory (high-use areas)
- Random sample i-Tree Streets inventories (character areas)
- Stakeholder input
- Operations review
- Benefit analyses
- Master Plan
- Included a revision
- Included contractor presentation Council

Scope

- Population characteristics
- Maintenance needs
- Infrastructure conflicts
- Opinions, both good and bad, about the existing management program
- Expressed public opinion
- Addressed storms preparedness separately
- Addressed hazard trees separately

Analyses

- Discussed concerns with inventory data
- Discussed concerns with existing practices and operations
- Prioritized maintenance by risk
- Estimated budgets for known work
- Made recommendations to change the structure of the organization

Inclusions
**Findings.** A program was lacking and it needed to start, especially if they were going to keep planting trees. Staff needed to be hired and the department re-organized to better manage trees.

**Results.** Plan was accepted by Council. APWA Reporter accepted article on about process of getting a plan for trees. It is published.

**Concerns.** Originally suggested the hiring of 2 staff, city believed 1 staff was reasonable.
Have an arborist and a comprehensive plan that discusses the importance of trees. They have a planner and a city government that cares what the comprehensive plan states.

2011: GA DOF/USDA Forest Service UC&F grant for an inventory, i-Tree Streets and Canopy, and plan.

2012: Project begins
- Targeted tree inventory (trees & planting sites)
- City input
- City project-work on the plan

2012: In progress
Milton’s Plan

- Complete inventories of high-use areas
- **Wooded area management assessment**
- Stakeholder input
- Benefit analyses
- **Canopy assessment**
- Management plan
- **Key policy actions**
- **Green infrastructure**
- **No-net loss of trees**

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**Scope**

- Population characteristics
- Maintenance needs
- Infrastructure conflicts
- Wooded area management assessment
- **City input into goals**
- **City input into policy actions**
- **City input into plan assessment**—they did some of the work

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**Analyses**

- Discussed concerns with inventory data
- Prioritized maintenance by risk
- Estimated budgets for known work
- **Will make recommendations that could affect policy**
- **Will make recommendations that will align with comprehensive plan**
- **Will make recommendations about green infrastructure**
FY 2013 $ for tasks
• Proactive cycles
• Reactive priority removals and prunes
• Tree planting

FY 2014 $ for tasks
• Reactive priority removals
• Tree planting

FY 2015 $ for tasks
• Proactive cycles
• Tree planting

FY 2016 $ for tasks
• Proactive cycles
• Tree planting

FY 2017 $ for tasks
• Proactive cycles
• Tree planting

Findings. In process. But we know that some people in the city don’t care much for street trees—Preliminary i-Tree Canopy results are 54% canopy, 20% pasture.

Results. Don’t know but we are optimistic...especially with the congruency to the comprehensive plan.

Concerns. Department heads that think trees cause maintenance inefficiencies. And, how much canopy should they have?
Back to developing a plan for your community.

Why did I spend all that time telling you about three communities that already have plans?
Because at some point in the not too distant past, they were not unlike other communities

- They had no urban forest management plan
- They had no or limited money for tree maintenance or plan development

But now,

- They sold the need for a plan to decision-makers
- Now, they have a plan
- So far, two are success stories
What did these stories have in common? (Besides what we just went over on the previous slide.)

The commonalities will help you get a management plan...

Was it the data used for baseline? Was it the results? Was it format? Was it sections included?

I THINK:

- Knew **city visioning and policies and used them to their advantage** (comp plans, safety-driven directives, involvement of Council and even those who don’t love trees).
- Knew they had to **engage others** and form partnerships.
- Knew input from the public was important and included it in the process and the plan—**the taxpayer wants this done**.
- Knew that they had to **seek alternative funding**.
- Knew they had to be **vested and do some work too**...not just hand it off to a contractor.
- Provided training and **education** to others.
As far as content, our recent most successful plans included:

- Inventory, i-Tree, and/or UTC as baselines
- Assessment analysis—the plan has to be based on observed trends to justify findings and proposed budgets and other recommendations
- Public meetings—taxpayer is king
- Internal meetings with vested city staff—engage them and they will care
- Customized Table of Contents—the city thought about what they needed in the plan, not what I told them they needed. Basically, sections are added specific to city needs.
- Outreach—either for city staff or the public
What **DOES** this look like. This is an example of what I think will be a very successful plan.

- **Community Forest Program Overview**
  - Provides an overview of the existing tree management program and presents goals and objectives for the community forest.

- **Community Forest Assessment and Analyses**
  - Summarizes the three studies completed as baselines for this plan. Trends, results, and observations about the tree inventory, i-Tree Streets analysis, and i-Tree Canopy assessment are presented.

- **Key Policy Actions**
  - Provides directives that integrate opportunities to increase tree cover, promote green infrastructure and achieve a no-net-loss of trees.

- **Management Plan**
  - Outlines a solid plan for the management of trees.
Questions

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