Citizen Involvement and Tree Boards

Windermere Tree Board & Historical Board
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Ways of Getting Things Done

- Ceremonies and Awards: Arbor Day Observance & Tree City USA
- Funding
- Keeping Trees in the Forefront
- Alternative Funding: Public vs. Private
- Information & Education
- Helping Property Owners Do It Better
- Targeting Information
- Working With Those Who Provide Services
- Education & Training for Arborists
- Working with Nurseries
- Ensuring Public Acceptance
- Working with Volunteers
- Working with Other City Officials
- Working with Public Utilities
- Working with the Media
- Meetings & Reports
Arbor Day Observance

Sponsor and Coordinate an Arbor Day Ceremony and Tree Planting!

Partner with ISA Certified Arborists to Educate Citizens About Trees
Windermere Treebute Arbor Day Festival - Town Wide Celebration

Inspire People to Plant, Nurture and Celebrate Trees!

Experience the beauty of trees up high!
Finding Funding for Arbor Day
Keeping Trees in the Forefront

- If trees are to successfully compete with other needs, they must be perceived by budget decision makers as important or vital to quality of life in the city.
- People relate to trees, not your program.
- If your citizens advocate trees, the needs of your program will likely follow.
- Publicize good works of your tree board, city forestry department, and volunteers, emphasizing the benefits of trees and future costs savings of what you do.
- Use publicity opportunities of Tree City USA to keep trees in the forefront. Ask National Arbor Day Foundation for copy of folder “Making the Most of Tree City USA—Publicity Ideas.”
- Learn “power structure “ of your city and community—who are leaders that reflect and influence public opinion? Get them on your side and have them speak for trees.
- Identify those in your communities who like trees and whose voices are respected (garden club members, wildlife enthusiasts, horticulturalists, scouting groups) and ask them to be advocates.
- Relate good tree care to jobs—for arborists, nursery people, landscape contractors,
- Make a strong case for the Urban Forest’s economic contribution to the total city, (I.E. Ecotourism—wildlife corridor for birds, butterflies and bees that encourage tourists who spend money in your town; beautification of city and parks; shade to off-set heat island effect keeping city cooler and power bills down; controlling storm water run-off into Chain of Lakes, rivers and oceans; carbon storage via sequestration and pure oxygen to us; food for local markets from fruiting trees;
Why should we plant plant trees?

Why is one section of North Lakeview Avenue one of the most photographed streets in Winter Garden? Among what do our children in hot parking lots? What can slow down traffic and make your street safer? What can increase your property value by as much as 20 percent? What can significantly reduce your monthly utility bill? What makes your air cleaner?

The answer to each of these questions is the same: large shade trees.

In Florida, there aren't many varieties of large canopy trees that thrive and produce the shade that is at the heart of the answer to these questions. However, there is one great tree that is the envy of communities further north.

The native live oak, Quercus virginiana, a large-canopy evergreen, thrives in Florida's heat and sandy soil, has a deep root system and withstands strong winds. That is why such specimens as the giant Sadler Oaks of Oakland Avenue have survived so many years. And that is why the live oak is the tree of choice for Winter Garden in Bloom's initiative, Made in the Shade.

There are also many understory trees, however. These are the trees that should be planted under power lines, close to houses and wherever overhead space is limited.

Most people know about crape myrtles, but there are many other varieties that do well here. Tabebuia (yellow or pink flowers), winged elm, poinciana, lead or yellow-flowered hawthorns, bald or pond cypress, native hollies, redbud, sweet bay and fringe tree are a few of the varieties of understory trees available.

While these trees provide landscape interest, it takes at least four small trees to have a positive effect similar to one well-placed live oak. Another option for large trees where space is limited is the new cultivars of the live oak, Cathedral or High-Rise.

These trees have an upright habit and can be planted where height is possible but width is limited. Both varieties are available from local nurseries, as are the other trees mentioned here.

For more information on Winter Garden in Bloom or Made in the Shade, visit the website www.cwgd.com/WinterGardenInBloom.
Alternative Funding

Alternative Public Funding

- Capital funds from revenue bonds in cases of critical need like storms or disaster. Approved by vote of populace.
- Property assessments for street side trees approved by city council.
- Benefit or assessment districts.
- New construction assessments for tree mitigation removals via tree ordinance.
- Permit System-Remove/Replace
- State and Federal Funding via USDA Forest Service for Florida Urban & Community Forestry Grants for tree program development, tree planting and demonstration projects.
- ISTEA now known as MAP-21 grants for federal surface transportation spending, bicycle and pedestrian routes.
- Neighborhood self assessment for funding street side tree planting.

Private Funding

- Not-for-Profit 501(c)(3) Corporation Tree Trust trustees and citizens donate cost of trees to honor special occasions. Donations from business in exchange for tax write-off.
- Memorial tree fund memorializing deceased
- Grants from philanthropic foundations or trusts. Visit Foundation Directory/Guidestar database at Library or Rollins College Philanthropy Center.
- Sponsored tree sales by tree board, business or other organization.
- Local business associations, Chamber of Commerce.
- “Adopt A” projects. Various organizations like service clubs, civic clubs, garden clubs, HOA’s may adopt a park, boulevard, city block and provide money for trees and maintenance.
Windermere

Schoolhouse clean-up
Windermere Historical Board and Windermere Tree Board completed a clean-up at the 1884 Schoolhouse National Register Historic site and completed restoration pruning on the historic orange grove. Irrigation is being installed on the site in preparation for planting historical varieties of plants and Florida native trees.
Information and Education—Helping Property Owners Do It Better!

Target Information to property owners

Work with pros who provide services to property owners.

Six things you should know when planting a tree.

1. **Call Before You Dig** - Several days before planting, call the national 811 hotline to have underground utilities located.

2. **Handle with Care** - Always lift tree by the root ball. Keep roots moist until planting.

3. **Digging a Proper Hole** - Dig 2 to 5 times wider than the diameter of the root ball with sloping sides to allow for proper root growth.

4. **Planting Depth** - The trunk flare should sit slightly above ground level and the topmost roots should be buried 1 to 2 inches.

5. **Filling the Hole** - Backfill with native soil unless it’s all clay. Tamp in soil gently to fill large air spaces.

6. **Mulch** - Allow 1 to 2 inch clearance between the trunk and the mulch. Mulch should be 2 to 3 inches deep.

For more tree-planting tips and information, visit arborday.org.

Source: [Arbor Day Foundation](https://arborday.org)
Targeting Information

• Identify your audience.
• While some info will be common to all property owners, some will be more applicable to certain neighborhoods, business districts or vegetation types within the Urban Forest.

• Take advantage of teachable moments during Arbor Day, after storms or when other problems become apparent.
Use Various Methods to Target Information

- Distribute fliers (use volunteers to go door to door).
- Local newspaper inserts.
- Inserts in utility statements.
- Newspaper special editions.
- Articles by garden editor.
- Television and radio, if it’s news!
- Direct mail, including inserts with utility bills.
- Public Meetings & Speaking Engagements
Quality of urban forests is largely determined by the person with the pruning saw.

Efforts of tree boards to upgrade skills of those who prune is positive for forests.
Education and Training Arborists

If the saw is improperly applied the effects can be devastating
Education and Training Arborists

Anything your tree board does to upgrade skills of those who prune benefits the forest.

Especially old growth champion trees like these Florida Long Leaf Pines.
Education You Might Do

• Write a newsletter for arborists and others.
• Subscribe and send them Tree City USA Bulletins, Florida Urban Forestry Council Bulletins and ISA Newsletters.
• Facilitate organization of city or regional arborists’ association, with meetings, seminars and newsletters for exchange of technical information.
• Host an Florida Urban Forestry Council seminar or ISA Florida Chapter Trees Conference.
Education You Might Do

- Get list from telephone directory, city hall business permits of all tree care firms and institutional grounds keepers in city.

- Arrange for pruning schools using city forestry department, urban forestry specialists from State Forestry Agency or Cooperative Extension Service or private arborists or instructors from ISA Florida Chapter.
Working with Nurseries

• Nurseries who sell trees and plants have a strong influence on the urban forest by species they make available and by quality of stock.
• Available stock is determined by “what sells.”
• Conscientious nursery suppliers care about the urban forest and are willing to market other species.
• Remember the importance of tree species diversity and note species you need in your forest inventory.
• Ask for their assistance in making other native species available.
• Cooperate with your nurseries to make test plantings of new and rare native species.
• Contract with nursery to grow successful diverse native species.
Ensuring Public Acceptance

- Urban forestry activities must be accepted by public. Some of what is done involves considerable inconvenience.
- Tree maintenance often requires traffic rerouting and autos moved.
- Maintenance work can be noisy and dusty.
- If citizens are to tolerate this they must believe tree work is worthwhile.
- Public acceptance comes from understanding what is done, why it’s necessary and that it was done well.
- Public relations must be planned, practiced and be part of your annual plan and budget.

- Publish summary of planned activities of annual program in local newspapers—how many trees to be planted, which trees pruned and why, what tree health measures taken.
- Contract property owners who will be affected in advance of work telling what is to be done and why it’s important.
- It is worst possible public relations to show up unannounced, insist that cars be moved, and start up noisy chainsaws, chippers and other equipment.
- Post signs such as “Tree pruning in progress for the health and safety of your trees. Thank you for your patience.”
Working with Volunteers

Using Volunteers in Urban Forest Requires Understanding Tasks They Can Perform

Coordinate Tree Planting Projects
Working with Volunteers

It is unreasonable to expect volunteers to do major pruning.

Except in special cases where such work is volunteered by professional arborists.
Working with Volunteers

Windermere Elementary School Students Planting Trees on Campus

We Love our Eagle Scout and Girl Scout Gold Projects
Using Volunteers Requires Planning & Coordination

- Volunteer projects should be identified in annual operational plan and consistent with your long range goals.
- Projects should be project specific (park, block, historic site) and should be able to be accomplished in a single day or phased (Eagle Scout project).
- You will have to solicit volunteers.
- Think first of who close to project might benefit or be interested.
- Consider who might be prone to damage or vandalize project. Ask them to help. Involvement helps develop sends of ownership.
- People will volunteer to help plant trees more readily than other urban forestry projects (invasive removals).
- Explain why project is important, give complete information, where, when, and what to wear and bring.
- Volunteer Release forms signed by volunteers and parents of minors.
- When contacting organization (club, school) ask a member to distribute info and sign up individual volunteers. Gives you one person to work with.
- On the day of project, welcome each volunteer, give instructions, and put them to work.
- Training of volunteers is extremely important. Prior to project you may wish to have a “train the trainer” session for crew leaders, who can then give on site instruction.
- Work with them but check on everyone and everything.
- Involve the media but give volunteers the credit.
- Thank everyone and everyone’s boss.
- Always have a First Aid Kit on site for safety.
Using Volunteers Requires Planning & Coordination

Windermere Preparatory School 7th Grade Science class does annual tree plantings, mulching, and invasive vine removals from historic 1887 Schoolhouse tree canopy and citrus groves.
Working with Public Utilities

Tall trees, such as: maple, oak, spruce, and pine

Plant the right tree in the right place
Plant taller trees away from overhead utility lines

40 feet height or less

25 feet height or less

50 ft

Medium trees, such as: washington hawthorn and goldenraintree

Small trees, such as: redbud, dogwood, and crabapple
Working with the Media

• To keep trees in forefront the media (newspapers, television and radio) must be used. Keep it simple!
• Understand that everyone else with a cause wants to use the media too and you must compete with them!
• Media exists to make a profit, inform, entertain and provide public service.
• A needed public service such as what property owners should do about trees following a storm will have best chance of being run.
• Get to know media people personally.
• Get to know the Garden Editor. Goal should be to have them recognize you as local authority on trees. They will seek you out when something newsworthy about trees happens.
• Remember your stories should be about trees and not the urban forest. People relate to trees, their trees.
• Few recognize they live in a forest.
• Take advantage of teachable moments: after a storm; after a casualty; when it is time to plant; rake leaves or treat for insects; Arbor Day; Tree City USA Awards; and when trees are especially pretty (in bloom or in fall color).
• Remember media loves a controversy. Be there with a reasonable view of trees when there are disputes about urban development into forested areas or over saving specimen trees. Approach this with caution.
• All bets are off on destroying Historic Champion Trees. Usually the public rallies to the tree’s defense.
• Buy some media time. Surest way to get media time is to pay for it.
• Try Public Service Announcements (PSA’s) available at National Arbor Day Foundation website.
Meetings and Reports

How often does Tree Board Meet, Monthly?

• Develop monthly agenda—your tree board’s monthly plan of work listing events, meetings, tasks and dates.
• Prepare written Agenda and distribute to members, guests and town for notice.
• At conclusion of meeting develop next meetings agenda including topics and guests.
• Invite guests—people to provide technical information, those who may be influenced by your decisions and those with whom you must cooperate.
• During meetings keep on schedule but make sure each topic gets a full airing.
• Reach closure on each topic. Closures may be consensus or a decision to delay pending further information
• Reaching consensus often avoids the necessity of a vote.
• By voting there are winners and losers. Through consensus all are winners.
• Take good notes. Keep the Minutes of your meetings on file.
• Furnish a summary of your actions taken to all who should know—city officials, guests, media.

Why does it meet?

• Develop a Mission Statement.
• Mission Statement: “Augment community awareness of our Urban Forest, provide education regarding the benefits of trees and a commitment to protect, preserve and proliferate our community’s Urban Forest. Beautification of our Windermere parks and recreation areas.”
Develop your own logo for branding!
Plant Trees With Your Children!

• "We must protect the forests for our children, grandchildren and children yet to be born. We must protect the forests for those who can’t speak for themselves such as the birds, animals, fish and trees."

• –Qwatsinas, (Hereditary Chief Edward Moody) Nuxalk Nation