



## Advisory Group Workshop #3

Thursday, April 20, 2023, 8-10am

[KnoxvilleTreePlan.org](http://KnoxvilleTreePlan.org)

### Meeting Summary

On April 20, 2023, the Knoxville Urban Forest Master Plan Advisory Group (AG) convened for its third and final workshop to discuss the plan, known statistics and characteristics of Knoxville's urban forest, and community goals and priorities. Sixty-one (61) people attended the workshop, held at the City of Knoxville Public Works Service Center. 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 Knoxville, 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 Knoxville'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). 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 Knoxville, as shown below.

<b>KNOXVILLE (TN)</b> <b>Indicators of a Sustainable Urban Forest</b>		<i>Assessed Score</i>			
		<b>Low</b>	<b>Mod.</b>	<b>Good</b>	
<b>The Trees</b>	Urban Tree Canopy Cover				
	Equitable Distribution				
	Streets & Parks <i>(public, landscape)</i>	Age/Size Distribution			
		Condition			
		Diversity / Pest Vulnerability			
		Suitability - Overhead	No data.		
		Suitability - Ground Level	No data.		
		Suitability - Soil Conditions	No data.		
		Suitability - Invasives			
		Suitability - Climate Adaptability			
	Natural Areas / Woodlands <i>(public or private)</i>	Age/Size Distribution	No data.		
		Condition	No data.		
		Diversity / Pest Vulnerability	No data.		
		Suitability - Overhead	No data.		
		Suitability - Ground Level	No data.		
		Suitability - Soil Conditions	No data.		
		Suitability - Invasives	No data.		
		Suitability - Climate Adaptability	No data.		
	All Other Lands <i>(primarily private)</i>	Age/Size Distribution	No data.		
		Condition	No data.		
		Diversity / Pest Vulnerability	No data.		
		Suitability - Overhead	No data.		
		Suitability - Ground Level	No data.		
		Suitability - Soil Conditions	No data.		
		Suitability - Invasives	No data.		
		Suitability - Climate Adaptability	No data.		
<b>The Players</b> <i>(with AG Voting Results)</i>	Neighborhood Action	37	26	0	
	Large Landholder Involvement	16	46	1	
	Green Industry Involvement	16	35	9	
	City Department/Agency Cooperation	4	56	2	
	Funder Engagement	22	32	9	
	Utility Engagement	21.5	32.5	8	
	Developer Engagement	57	5	0	
	Public Awareness	24	33.5	0.5	
	Regional Collaboration	51	10	0	
<b>The Mgmt Approach</b>	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				
<b>Totals</b>		<b>25</b> <b>53%</b>	<b>16</b> <b>34%</b>	<b>6</b> <b>13%</b>	



## TWO SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS & EMERGING THEMES

After the presentation, small groups talked through two topics:

1. Applying Management Practices Beyond the City
2. Goal Setting

Collected input is summarized below for each topic.

### Discussion #1: Applying UF Management Practices Throughout Knoxville

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

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:

**More proactive management would happen if the community was more aware of the importance/role of trees.** Many comments on what education is needed, and how to reach various groups.

**Education Topics.** Consistent education for the public on tree management. Comments included:

- **Invasives Removal**
  - Thinking about neighborhoods as habitats; by removing invasives, planting native and bringing awareness to residents about ecological and social impact.
  - Have someone facilitate community education and developing groups within the neighborhood. Plant ID, track removals, setting goals.
  - Bounty program
- **How To's**
  - How to select trees/plant trees (work with tree suppliers / retailers?)
  - Lack of knowledge about trees so many get topped or removed. Seems common with elderly, neighborhoods or developers.
- **Demonstration Development**
  - Providing a design template and making the case for conservation
- **Addressing Concerns**



- Misconceptions about trees. Too much trouble, maintenance, expensive
- Addressing security concerns/Perceptions around danger and forest. Managing understory/pruning. Holistic approach to social services.

### **Avenues of Dissemination**

- Communication with private property owners will be a marathon vs sprint. Lack of resources/funding to spread message
- Need a communication strategy with major employers/schools
- Providing resources to companies and educating them to encourage them to disseminate the information
- Potential for partnerships with nonprofits to get trees planted in low-income neighborhoods such as KCDC developments
- Provide training for people at an organization like SEED to be able to educate the public in low-income neighborhoods about tree planting and care

**Get HOAs, Large landholders Engaged.** Even HOA incentives for tree covered neighborhoods

- Suggestions to HOA landscaping guidelines
- More staffing for institutional property management
- Targeting large property owners
- How to we partner with private landowners - make sure they know the long term benefits

## **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 Knoxville'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:

### **Canopy Related**

- No net loss (x5)
- Stop/slow canopy loss/net neutral?
- 40% canopy by 2040 - 40 by 40
- Increasing net coverage in neighborhoods under mean %



- Smaller Segment Goals
  - Set a goal for (city) zones - 5-6
  - Tree canopy goal by land use type and neighborhood
  - City property goals
    - maybe higher
    - No net loss on city property (with resources to support)
  - Private property goals
- Maintaining 'no loss' in addition to education, incentives, and change in policy

### **Address Inequities**

- Equitable tree canopy priority in marginalized communities
- Ensuring quality and species in the tree deserts with good management
- Tree risk assessment and succession plans in marginalized communities
- Prioritizing areas of low canopy
- Equity for specific neighborhoods
- Landscaping grants in high-heat areas
- Create opportunity for more tree canopy in underserved communities

### **Boost Walkability**

- Improve shaded walkability
- Shaded walks for everyone
- Shaded walk on public transit lines
- City offers trees to property owners when putting in sidewalks

### **Improve Quality**

- Improve quality of existing canopy/reduce invasives
- Increasing the quality of canopy cover to include more natives and less invasives
- Bounty program for invasives removal
- Native/diversity goal for tree quality

### **Operations**

- Staffing and enforcement increases through sustainable funding
- Add employees to urban forestry and plans/review/inspections department
- Increase staffing levels to ensure better best mgmt practices (Trees Knoxville/City)

### **Education/Outreach**



- Create a long term campaign for trees (More trees please!) (UT student meeting)
- Create a long term, consistent message for trees the bridge generations
- Increase buy in from schools for tree education
- Create a Junior arborist program
- High school clubs for community service projects that involve trees/outdoors
- Education is a priority for all goals - bottom up and top down
- Robust educational program
- Liaison/Education for private property owners

### **Incentives**

- Develop a city certification for neighborhood that meet certain specs for trees (canopy coverage, lack of invasives, etc)
- More incentives programs
- Neighborhoods with a set tree plan get city \$ for trees and invasive management
- Revisit tree protection ordinance to increase the number of trees for commercial development

### **Preservation**

- Call before you cut
- Preservation of what we have as a %
- Planting requirement for new residential developments (as in Maryville)
- Educate developers on effects of clear cutting in urban areas and putting in concrete developments
- Address tree removal through development permit approval process with incentives
- Private developers - improve
- Tree bank - same canopy after so many years

### **Other**

- City to embrace living roofs
- A percentage of non-permeable surface turned permeable (pocket forest)
- Following suit behind boston's goals: Equity, preventative, community, trees
- Incorporating schools and their land for canopy coverage with budget to maintain them
- Granting renters permission to plant trees properly on rented property - how to create policy for that?



- Protecting and linking forestry corridors
- Tree goals for green infrastructure retrofits and new installations
- Shading parking lots and other asphalt-intensive areas
- Think ecologically about forest as vessels for life, habitat, ecosystem services and trees are a part of that
- Forest Connectivity through the city - not net loss
- Reduction in minimum parking requirements everywhere
- Creating process for removing asphalt and adding trees in existing parking lots

## Other Comments Received

- I very much am appreciating this process. Planning on staying involved on the goal side of things: I think trees are a key part of a healthy ecological system. Habitat should be one of the primary benefits listed in the plan
- I have realized the difficulty of improving and growing canopy in urban areas! Very challenging. It will be all hands on deck to move the needle. The 610 acres to raise canopy cover 1% was staggering to me. Really put the challenge into perspective
- I am happy this is being worked on and am excited to see what happens! Happy to help facilitate initiatives with the schools
- I'm surprised that 1% canopy is equivalent to size of UT campus
- Love the idea of junior arborists or "Tree Corps"
- My big idea is still for KUB to have an option on every customer bill to go towards tree canopy and maintenance. This would generate a lot of revenue
- Super inspired by all of our workshops!
- Connections between city urban forestry and city parks is important
- Overlapping goals with Knox Vounty is important. ie: if surrounding is not making efforts to protect canopy it undermines what's happening at the city
- The lack of data on "the trees" (in time, it will come) ;-)
- Volunteers
- Keep Big Orange Country Green
- On the "no net loss" potential goal . . . while it could be a city-wide goal, on a neighborhood basis, there will be some who'll have a harder time accomplishing this (e.g. neighborhoods with a lot of large trees are prone to lose those), and some neighborhoods simply may not place trees as a priority area



- Surprised how little tree canopy there is in some parts of Knoxville. Troubles that Kasey's shop has no great involvement in city parks tree management
- It has been great meeting all the people in my group at each workshop. The ideas presented should really provide us with a good starting point towards developing goals.
- As a sit-in for a member who was unavailable I was pleasantly surprised at the depth of the discussion and concern of the issues. The small group is productive and informative. It allows multiple agencies, groups and departments to work to a common goal while learning about everyone's individual contributions
- It seems that the common themes were education, addressing underserved communities, and funding. Great workshops!
- Incorporate living roofs into building codes
- Bounty program: bring a trailer full of invasives, get \$50.
- Possible engagement from homeless population. Homeless and unemployed individuals already collect empty cans and scrap metal
- More funding for trees management within the city
- Regulating availability of invasives at nurseries and big box stores like Home Depot, and promoting natives
- This has been a great experience and I am impressed with the community engagement of this project. It seems like a lot of the Trees Knoxville Board members are the same page
- Minimum canopy goal of no net loss, but prefer something more, at least 40% over long term
- Improve tree quality - quality as in natives prioritized over invasive and recognize that large native trees are much more valuable. 1 little tree does not equal 1 big tree
- The biggest surprises to me was that Knoxville's current status of 38% and so many cities were so low, ie: 20% canopy coverage
- I expected UT to be 'low' on canopy but not in the 'lowest' category. I enjoyed seeing the other types of goals cities have set. It is broader than a basic percentage goal
- USDA Forest Services Urban & Community. IRA grant -> City urban forestry? CAC? -> SEED & CAC AmeriCorps and CAC Housing and Energy. Provide training to community youth as Tree consultants identifying tree placement and tree resources. Staff training from grant. Expand canopy in communities with fewer resources
- Working groups were receptive and a safe place for discussions and seemed productive



- I appreciate the groups being realistic on a no net loss goal because increasing the canopy by 1% (640 acres) seems impossible in so ones with so much growth
- Thank you so much for allowing the Aslan Foundation to be part of this. It has been excellent.
- I would love to stay involved with regards to invasive species management, canopy goals, diversity, etc. This process has been wonderful, and Ijams is a resource for the city and would love to stay involved! Thanks.
- Need to fill out data that is missing to get an accurate picture. More private focus. Good program. Glad to have been a part of it. Proud that Knoxville is taking this important issue seriously.
- Really robust group and conversation. How will this be translated to elected officials? What is practical expectation of increasing \$? Education, education, education. Multi-level, multi-audience
- Good start!

## Parting Reminders

Before the group departed, the following reminders:

- 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 TreesKnoxville for utilization when implantation begins.
- Help spread the word to your networks to provide their input too.
  - [www.KnoxvilleTreePlan.org](http://www.KnoxvilleTreePlan.org)
  - Invite Us Over! (available through July) We can come to your next event to talk about this project.
  - Give Input on website online form.
  - Come to upcoming open houses - May 4 and May 11.

## Advisory Group Members

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

Garfield Adams, Knoxville County Schools (Operations)

\*Sam Adams, University of Tennessee (Arborist)

\*Andrea Bailey, Aslan Foundation

\*Cheryl Ball, City of Knoxville (Mayor's Office)



Vicki Baumgartner, Dogwood Arts  
\*Ben Bentley, Knoxville Community Dev. Corp (housing authority)  
\*Karin Beuerlein, Trees Knoxville  
\*Katherine Bike, Knoxville County Schools (Board)  
Rick Blackburn, Blackburn Development Group  
\*Brian Blackmon, City of Knoxville (Office of Sustainability)  
Angel Bowman, Neighborhood Rep - Lonsdale Neighborhood Assoc.  
Kali Burke, University of Tennessee (Student Rep)  
\*Ashley Burnette, Home Builders Association of Greater Knoxville  
Jayne Burritt, Knoxville Public Building Authority  
\*Rachel Butzler, City of Knoxville (Public Service)  
\*John Cadotte, Neighborhood Rep - Scottish Pike Neighborhood  
\*Khann Chov, Keep Knoxville Beautiful  
JoAnn Coakley, Knoxville Garden Club  
\*Gordon Coker, Neighborhood Rep - Fourth and Gill Neighborhood  
Martin Cordell, Neighborhood Rep - Old North Knoxville  
\*Jason Cottrell, University of Tennessee (Facility Services)  
\*Carl Courter, University of Tennessee (Student Rep)  
Greg Easterly, Neighborhood Rep - Norwood Community Assoc.  
\*Carol Evans, Legacy Parks  
\*Joyce Feld, Scenic Knoxville  
Jennifer First, University of Tennessee (College of Social Work)  
\*Bob Graves, Carex Design Group / East TN ASLA  
Duane Grieve, East TN Community Design Center  
Avery Hawkins, University of Tennessee (Student Rep)  
\*Tim Hester, City of Knoxville (Parks and Recreation)  
Tim Hill, Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission  
\*Jessie Hillman, Knoxville -Knox County Planning  
\*Melissa Hinten, University of Tennessee (Sustainability)  
\*Philip Hipps, Neighborhood Rep - Norwood Homeowners Assoc.  
Breauna Hollaway, Neighborhood Rep - Mechanicsville Community Association  
Jim Holleman, Avison Young  
Monty Howard, Neighborhood Rep - Historic Gibbs Drive  
\*Michele Hummel, Downtown Knoxville Alliance  
\*Dylan Jackson, City of Knoxville (Civil Engineering)  
Sharon Jean-Philippe, University of Tennessee (Urban Forestry)  
\*Josh Johnson, Knoxville Utilities Board  
Kelsey Jones, City of Knoxville (Tree Board)  
Rebekah Jane Justice, City of Knoxville (Mayor's Office)  
Matthew Kellogg, Appalachian Mountain Bike Club  
Barbara Kelly, Knox/Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC)  
Allison Kelly, Trees Knoxville  
\*George Kemp, Citizens Cemetery



Lindsey Kimble, Bike Walk Knoxville  
\*Kasey Krouse, City of Knoxville (Forestry)  
\*Charles Kwit, University of Tennessee (Forestry, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology)  
Emily Laird, University of Tennessee (Student Rep)  
\*Jeff Lawless, Knox County Schools  
\*Jon Livengood, City of Knoxville (Engineering & Transportation)  
\*Andrea Ludwig (UT Extension)  
Joseph Mack, Knox County Parks and Recreation  
\*Dale Madden, Trees Knoxville (Chair)  
\*Cross McCallie, Tate & McCallie Realtors, Inc.  
\*Gerry Moll, Native Plant Rescue Squad  
\*Bethany Morris, University of Tennessee (Landscape Architect- Facility Services)  
\*Ben Nanny, Ijams Nature Center  
Jason Periard, Knox County Schools (Operations- Security)  
\*Lee Popkin  
Andy Pulte, University of Tennessee (Gardens)  
\*Elaine Reed, Knoxville Utilities Board  
\*Jim Richards, Knoxville Botanic Garden  
\*Mark Riehl, City of Knoxville (Plans Review & Inspections)  
Liz Riester, TN Riverline  
\*Charlotte Rodina, Beardsley Farm  
\*Jessica Rodocker, Knox Area Association of Realtors / Trees Knoxville  
\*Lee Rumble, Knox County Extension/ TN Landscape Association  
\*Hancen Sale, Knox Area Association of Realtors  
\*John Saymar, Knox County Schools  
\*Jason Scott, CAC Americorps  
Wade Seifert, University of Tennessee (Health and Wellness)  
\*Debbie Sharp, City of Knoxville (Office of Neighborhoods)  
\*Randy Short, Tennessee Valley Authority  
Doug Shover, Knox County Schools (Operations - Facilities)  
\*Kinsey Simmerman, Knox County Health Department  
\*Charles Sims, University of Tennessee (Baker Center)  
Tommy Smith, City of Knoxville (City Council)  
\*Wes Soward, Urban Wilderness Coordinator  
\*Nick St. Sauveur, Cortese Tree Specialist  
Dan Steinhoff, City of Knoxville (Tree Board)  
\*Kayla Stuart, City of Knoxville (Tree Board)  
Tiffany Sutton, Aslan Foundation  
Rylan Thompson, Knox County Master Gardeners  
\*Jerry Thorton, Sierra Club Harvey Broom Group  
James Tomerlin, Neighborhood Rep - Cumberland Estates Neighborhood  
Chris Towe, Knox County Schools (Operations - Maintenance)  
\*Paige Travis, City of Knoxville (Communications)



David Vandergriff, GriffArbor Consulting

\*Diane Warwick, Tennessee Division of Forestry

Brent Waugh, Neighborhood Rep - Historic Fourth and Gill

Tom Welborn, Trees Knoxville (Past Chair)

\*Chris Welsh, TN Ornithological Society - Knoxville Chapter

\*Chad Weth, City of Knoxville (Public Service)

\*Curtis Williams, City of Knoxville (Engineering)

Belinda Woodiel-Brill, Knoxville Area Transit