



Advisory Group Workshop #2 Summary & Emerging Themes

Thursday, June 13, 2024, 3-5 pm
LouisvilleTreePlan.org

Meeting Summary

On June 13, 2024, the Louisville Urban Forest Master Plan Advisory Group (AG) convened for its second workshop to discuss the players who impact and are impacted by Louisville's urban forest, and possibilities for centralized leadership and implementation of the coming master plan. Fifty-eight (58) people attended the workshop, held at the Goodwill Opportunity Center. A list of the AG members in attendance is included at the end of this report.

Welcome and introductory remarks were made by Cindi Sullivan, Executive Director of TreesLouisville.

Presentation. Rachel Comte with Urban Canopy Works (consultants hired for this project) reviewed the approach for this UFMP effort, provided a recap of the last workshop, a brief explanation of the role of trees in this context and the Players involved. The AG then spent the next 60 minutes discussing and scoring each indicator. The remaining 30 minutes were used for group discussion on centralization and leadership for implementation of the plan. Unlike the first workshop, where the performance level in each indicator was determined ahead of time based on quantitative data, the topic of this workshop is more qualitative and subjective. For this reason, the AG was tasked with deciding and scoring how Louisville is doing in each "Players" category by individual votes. This was done in the first group discussion session. The results showing the scores of each indicator are found in the chart below. The second group discussion topic covered centralization and leadership.

A summary of the discussion topics and Advisory Group comments follows. Further comments were turned in via facilitator notes.

LOUISVILLE (KY) Indicators of a Sustainable Urban Forest		Assessed Score			
		Low	Mod.	Good	
The Trees	Urban Tree Canopy Cover				
	Equitable Distribution				
	Streets & Parks <i>(public, landscape)</i>	Age/Size Distribution	<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Condition	<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Diversity / Pest Vulnerability	<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Suitability - Overhead	<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Suitability - Ground Level	<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Suitability - Soil Conditions	<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Suitability - Invasives	<i>incomplete data</i>		
		Suitability - Climate Adaptability	<i>incomplete data</i>		
	Natural Areas / Woodlands <i>(public or private)</i>	Age/Size Distribution	<i>no data</i>		
		Condition	<i>no data</i>		
		Diversity / Pest Vulnerability	<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Overhead	<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Ground Level	<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Soil Conditions	<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Invasives	<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Climate Adaptability	<i>no data</i>		
	All Other Lands <i>(primarily private)</i>	Age/Size Distribution	<i>no data</i>		
		Condition	<i>no data</i>		
		Diversity / Pest Vulnerability	<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Overhead	<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Ground Level	<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Soil Conditions	<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Invasives	<i>no data</i>		
		Suitability - Climate Adaptability	<i>no data</i>		
	The Players <i>(with AG Voting Results)</i>	Neighborhood Action	17	37	0
		Large Landholder Involvement	36	16	0
Green Industry Involvement		11	37	3	
City Department/Agency Cooperation		30	20	1	
Funder Engagement		12	34	4	
Utility Engagement		29.5	21.5	1	
Developer Engagement		34	18	0	
Public Awareness		35.5	15.5	0	
Regional Collaboration		37	14	0	
The Mgmt Approach	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				

Group Discussions and Emerging Themes

After the initial presentation, the AG broke into eight small groups for discussion. Each breakout group had 6-10 people, including a pre-arranged facilitator from the UFMP project team. In a set amount of time (approximately 10 minutes for each indicator), each small group explored the topic introduced by Rachel, and reported back to the larger group their priorities. Detailed notes on each small group conversation were taken and handed in at the conclusion of the meeting.

The discussions resulted in wide-ranging comments and ideas about the engagement of the various players who impact and are impacted by the urban forest.



For ease of consumption and understanding, the notes from each discussion group were combined into themes heard. This summary of themes that emerged is found in the following pages. A full recording of all raw notes from each group can be found in a separate document.

Discussion #1: Scoring each “Player”

For each indicator, small groups were asked the following questions: How are we doing today, with what level of engagement - Low, Moderate or Good? How do we improve? What do we need to do to achieve the next performance level?

Overall, Louisville was scored as Low in 6 indicators, and moderate in the remaining 3 indicators.

Themes and detailed comments turned in under each indicator follows.

Discussions and notes revealed the following emerging themes:

Neighborhood Action

*Overall Score: **Moderate***

Vote: 17 low, 37 moderate, 0 good

There is a large difference from neighborhood to neighborhood on how engaged residents were with trees. A lack of understanding of the benefits that trees provide is one factor, and socioeconomic factors were brought up frequently as well. Priorities are different for neighborhoods in historically underserved

areas. Solutions were focused on increased resources to help with engagement and education for neighborhoods.

Large Landholders

*Overall Score: **Low***

Vote: 36 low, 16 moderate, 0 good

Lack of coordination and lack of resources came up frequently in discussion. Without community wide goals and incentives to participate, most landowners are focused on their own priorities and keeping costs down. For solutions, many group members brought up the possibility of incentive programs to make tree planting and management more attainable. Education was also a strong theme.

Green Industry

*Overall Score: **Moderate***

Vote: 11 low, 37 moderate, 3 good

Many acknowledged that there are many organizations and citizens in the industry who are knowledgeable, active, and engaged. However, individual missions, lack of resources and lack of common goals prevent better coordination. Established common goals would help here, and purposeful coordination to bring the right people together.

City Department/agency Coordination

*Overall Score: **Low***

Vote: 30 low, 20 moderate, 1 good

Constant staffing and organizational changes were brought up as a challenge to coordination. Also lack of resources for more proactive planning and communication, and a perception of competing priorities can be a problem. Similar to green industry coordination, solutions included common goals and formalized coordination policies or methods.

Funder Engagement

*Overall Score: **Moderate***

Vote: 12 low, 34 moderate, 4 good

Many attendees felt that while there were some engaged funders in the community, they tended to be the same ones that organizations went to with funding requests repeatedly, leaving many tree-focused projects competing for the same limited funding. Also, funding tends to go to tree planting projects, with very little to no funding provided for longer term maintenance of trees. Solutions included prioritizing needs, coordination of efforts, and more outreach to engage more funders.

Utility Engagement

*Overall Score: **Low***

Vote: 29.5 low, 21.5 moderate, 1 good

Many attendees felt that utilities are focused on their own priorities, and not motivated or incentivized to think about trees or factor trees into plans. Lack of coordination among various utilities and local government was also brought up as an issue. A lack of innovation was also brought up as a challenge to

changing the status quo. Improving coordination and making design requirements that include trees in the planning process were cited as potential solutions.

Developer Engagement

*Overall Score: **Low***

Vote: 34 low, 18 moderate, 0 good

Many group members felt that the profit focus of development prevented preservation and planting of trees, as developers want to use all available space for building. Education for developers was cited as one solution, to help with the understanding that trees add value to property. Some group members cited lack of enforcement or the need for policy change as factors that might improve engagement.

Public Awareness

*Overall Score: **Low***

Vote: 35.5 low, 15.5 moderate, 0 good

The requirement for property owners to maintain trees in the public right of way was cited as a barrier to public engagement and appreciation of trees. Many feel that trees are too costly to plant and maintain, and ultimately will be a nuisance or liability. Renting rather than owning was brought up as an issue, as landlords frequently do not want trees on their properties. Solutions included assistance for residents who could not afford the cost of tree care and a major education campaign to help residents understand the benefits of trees to their quality of life.

Regional Collaboration

*Overall Score: **Low***

Vote: 37 low, 14 moderate, 0 good

Different interests and priorities across the county and surrounding areas was brought up as an issue, along with the lack of a cohesive plan or common goals to aid in coordination. More funding and common goals would help with collaboration.

Discussion #2: Centralization and Leadership

The previous workshop highlighted the need for more centralized or coordinated work related to trees. Many in the group felt that strong leadership was needed to ensure the plan was implemented and all the right people were involved and working together to meet goals. But, what would that look like?

Discussions and notes revealed the following emerging themes:

Committee/Partnerships. Many felt that the Metro government was not the appropriate place to house such an effort because so much of the urban forest is on private property. However, Metro should be very involved and has an important role to play. But other players must be heavily involved as well. Many brought up looking at what other cities are doing to implement their plans.

Communication. Communication and coordination was brought up as key. All involved need to be aware of what others are doing, what each organization or person's role is, and the goals everyone is working towards. Establishing clear communication avenues and methods was brought up many times.

Clear Goals/Measurable Benchmarks. Group members felt that a clear set of goals and the ability to measure progress, would go a long way towards providing direction and a clear path forward.

Parting Reminders

Before the group departed, the following reminders:

- Third workshop is on July 18, 3-5 pm at the South Central Regional Library.
- Additional Comments: rachel@urbancanopyworks.com
- Engage your Network. Help spread the word to your networks to provide their input too - details can be found at <https://www.louisvilletreeplan.org/promotions.html>
 - Invite Us Over! (available through August) We can come to your next event or group meeting.
 - Give Input on website online survey.
 - Come to one of our Community Workshops, dates and locations are on the project website.

Advisory Group Members

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

*McCauley Adams, Brown Forman

Vashawn Anderson, Neighborhood Representative - Pleasure Ridge Park **(EC)**

*Kevin Bailey, KY Transportation Cabinet (KYTC)

Juva Barber, Building Industry of Greater Louisville

*Von Barnes, Neighborhood Representative - Algonquin **(EC)**

*LaDonna Barnett, Neighborhood Representative - Chickasaw **(EC)**

Jordan Basham, Louisville Water Company

*Donald Biddle, University of Louisville - Geographic and Environmental Sciences

*Deborah Bilitski, Waterfront Park

*Emily Boone, Greater Louisville Sierra Club

*Jerry Brown, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)

*Jeffrey Brown, Louisville Metro Government - Department of Public Works

Ronel Brown, Neighborhood Representative **(EC)**

Ben Cecil, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)

*Eneitra Beattie, Chickasaw Neighborhood Representative

Bradley Coomes, Louisville Metro Government - Air Pollution Control District (APCD)

*Carolyn Cromer, Sisters of Nazareth
*Jody Dahmer, Beargrass Thunder
Daniel DeCaro, University of Louisville
Lisa Dettlinger, Louisville Grows
Katie Doran, Louisville Metro Government - Fleets and Facilities
*Mesude Duyar, Louisville Metro Government - Parks & Recreation
*Barry Edgar, Louisville Metro Government - Urban Forestry
Jaquelyn Eklund, ISA Certified Arborist
Kristen English, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)
Cheryl Fisher, Rubbertown Community Advisory Council
*Rebecca Fleischaker, Louisville Downtown Partnership
Ozzy Gibson, Louisville Metro Government - Parks & Recreation
*Kent Gootee, Mindel Scott (LA)
*Morgan Grubbs, TreesLouisville
*Helen Hacker, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC), GLI
Frank "Peanut" Hall - Neighborhood Representative - California **(EC)**
Felicia Harper - Kentuckiana Regional Planning & Development Agency (KIPDA)
Tonisha Hearn, Louisville Metro Government - Office for Safe & Healthy Neighborhoods
Patrick Henry - Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)
Bill Hollander, TreesLouisville
Keelonda Hunter, Neighborhood Representative - Parkland **(EC)**
*Barbara Hurt, Dendrifund
*Mike Jackson, Urban League / Kentucky Greens Co.
*Julie James, Filson Club
*Charlotte Jones, Goodwill Industries
*Jennifer Judd, Urban Wood Economy
*Jessica Kane, Jefferson Memorial Forest & Natural Areas
*Kate Karl, Louisville Metro Government - Urban Forestry
Jennifer Kern, Louisville Metro Government - Department of Public Works
*Mike King, Louisville Metro Government - Department of Public Works
Kathy Knotts, Gheens Foundation
Allison Lloyd, PepsiCo
Maria Koetter, CoolSeal by GuardTop
Chris Kolb, Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS)
*Charlie Marsh, TreesLouisville / Stephen C Gault Co.

*Kurt Mason

Anthony Mathis, Norton Healthcare

*Lori Mattingly, Angel's Envy

*Bear Miles, TreesLouisville

Keith Morgan, Neighborhood Representative - Shawnee **(EC)**

Jeff O'Brien, Louisville Metro Government - Economic Development

Chris O'Bryan, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)

Andrew Owen - Louisville Metro Government - Council Rep. District 9

*Brooke Pardue, Parks Alliance of Louisville (PAL)

*Prasanthi Persad, Wilderness Louisville

*Patrick Piuma, University of Louisville

*Michelle Ralkey, Hess Landscape

Sumedha Rao, Louisville Metro Government - Office of Sustainability

Tee Ray, Bob Ray Co.

Steve Ricketts, Kentucky Solar Energy Society

Lynn Rippy, YouthBuild Louisville

Lorri Roberts, Brightside, Inc.

Donald Robinson, Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS)

*Jan Rogers, Neighborhood Representative **(EC)**

*Robert Rogers, Neighborhood Representative - Shawnee **(EC)**

Betsy Ruhe, Louisville Metro Government - Council Rep. District 21

*Sarah Beth Sammons, Booker Design Collaboration

*Jared Smith, Louisville Metro Government - Urban Forestry

Ted Smith, University of Louisville - Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute

*Matt Spalding, Olmsted Parks Conservancy

*Leia Staples, Bellarmine University

*Cindi Sullivan, TreesLouisville

*John Swintosky, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC)

Nadereca Thibeaux, Louisville Medical and Education District

Donovan Taylor, Neighborhood Representative - Chickasaw (EC)

*Erin Wagoner, Metro Sewer District (MSD)

*Chris Weidamann, KY Division of Forestry

*Matthew Wieczorek, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC), LG&E

Mary Ellen Wiederwohl, Accelerator for America

*Julia Williams, Louisville Metro Government - Office of Planning & Design Services

Dash Williams, Louisville Metro Government - Office of Sustainability

*Sean Willis, University of Louisville - Urban Design Studio

Ward Wilson

*Liz Winlock, Metro Tree Advisory Committee (TAC), Olmsted Parks Conservancy

*Ray Yeager, University of Louisville / Green Heart

Mark Zoeller, Louisville Metro Government - Fleets and Facilities