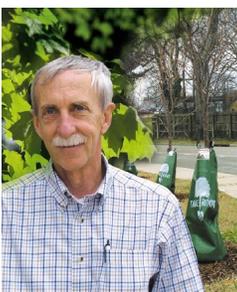


2012 State of the Trees Report

Department of Public Works
Division of Urban Forestry

2012 – A Forester’s Perspective

2012 was a quiet year compared with 2011. Thank goodness! We did not experience the same level and ferocity of storms as in that wild year. The Take Root Initiative continued to plant new trees but the number of available spaces in the target area known as the “Expanded Central Business District” has dwindled to almost none. The Take Root program hosted another round of Citizen Forester classes and this year added an “advance” class for those wishing to expand their



Gene Hyde is editor of this publication.

knowledge of proper tree care techniques and issues which affect the urban forestry realm. Classes this year ran from September to October. In March we held our Arbor Day ceremony at the John A. Patten Recreation Center. This center had been hit quite hard by

the tornado in April, 2011 and lost most of its tree cover. On a chilly but sunny day in early spring a host of local residents were joined by our Volkswagen partners to plant nearly 50 oaks, zelkova, poplar and other trees to help restore the canopy to the campus.

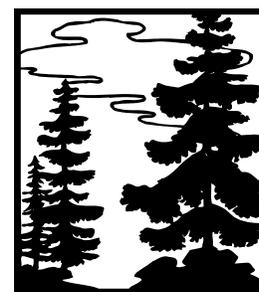
I travelled to Knoxville in April to meet with the local Tree Board and their mayor to talk about the Chattanooga urban forestry program and what it means to the community. Apparently the mayor was suitably impressed as Knoxville hired an urban forester six months later.

The Emerald Ash Borer, has been located in many more areas in East Tennessee and moves ever closer. This non-native insect, known simply as EAB, has already caused much destruction up north and it seems it is just a matter of time before it attacks the estimated 200,000 ash trees in Chattanooga.

More on these stories is contained within this report.

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Special Points of interest in 2012:

- Chattanooga was a “Tree City” for the 22th year.
- Arbor Day was held at the John A. Patten Recreation Center on March 2.
- The backlog of Service Requests is approximately 4.

Chattanooga marks its 22st year as a Tree City

When the Urban Forestry program was officially launched in 1990 Mayor Gene Roberts let it be known that he wanted Chattanooga to achieve the goal of becoming a Tree City, USA community. That goal was accomplished in 1990 as well as in 21 subsequent years. The following requirements must be attained before a community can apply to the Arbor Day Foundation for Tree City Status:

1. Have a Tree Board or Department.
2. Have a tree ordinance.
3. Have a community forestry program with an annual budget of at least \$2 per

capita.

4. Have an Arbor Day celebration and Proclamation.

This year the 22th anniversary was marked with our Arbor Day celebration on March 2th at the John A. Patten Recreation Center. On March 3th a special work day was held with volunteers from the neighborhood and Volkswagen to plant 48 additional trees on the grounds of the center. The planting holes were pre-dug by a local volunteer. All of the trees survived another blistering summer and are doing well.

Tree Planting in 2012

A total of 24 species were planted as street trees and Take Root trees by in-house and contract crews in 2012 . They are:

1. 'Autumn Blaze' Maple	7 ea.	13. Osage Orange	3 ea.
2. 'Princeton' American Elm	42 ea.	14. Yellow-poplar	30 ea.
3. 'Village Green' Zelkova	8 ea.	15. Pin Oak	45 ea.
4. Yoshino Cherry	77 ea.	16. European Hornbeam	1 ea.
5. 'Hightower' Willow Oak	35 ea.	17. 'Redmond' Linden	8 ea.
6. Redbud	38 ea.	18. 'Little Gem' Magnolia	5 ea.
7. 'Bosque' Elm	3 ea.	19. 'Dynamite' Crape Myrtle	20 ea.
8. Goldenrain Tree	4 ea.	20. Overcup Oak	10 ea.
9. 'Happidaze' Sweetgum	4 ea.	21. Trident Maple	36 ea.
10. Ginkgo	3 ea.	22. Yellowwood	4 ea.
11. Chinese Pistache	2 ea.	23. Foster Holly	2 ea.
12. American Fringetree	19 ea.	24. 'Aristocrat' Pear	1 ea.
		TOTAL	407

The total cost of these trees was \$27,743

Tree Commission News

The Tree Commission began work on a new Tree Ordinance to replace the original ordinance from 1990 that was in great need of updating. After two years of debate and coordination with other departments the new Tree Ordinance was passed in June, 2012. Highlights include the following:

1. The Tree Commission expanded from seven to nine members with each representing a council district.
2. Of those nine members five must be professionally trained in related fields as an Arborist, Landscape Architect, Biologist, Realtor/Developer/Home Builder or General Contractor, and an Engineer/Architect/Surveyor.
3. The ordinance recognizes that the Office of the City Forester resides in the Department of Public Works.
4. Permits are now issued from the Land Development Office housed in the Development Resource Center.
5. Decisions of the City Forester may be appealed to the Tree Commission and, if necessary, to the Board of Appeals and Variances

The Tree Commission decided to reinstate the annual awards celebration after a two year hiatus. The event took place on a warm and pleasant evening in late September in the courtyard next to the Crash Pad.

2012 Tree Commission Award Winners

1. Highland Park Neighborhood Association (Neighborhood Association Award) Judith Schorr
2. Michael Wurzel (Citizen Involvement Award)
3. UTC (School Grounds Award) Chris Charland
4. Grace Episcopal Church (Golden Acorn Award) Rev. Susan Butler
5. LIV Development (Green Developers Award)
6. ABC Tree Company (City Forester's Award) Milo Melton

Jan Pass was added as the eighth member of the Tree Commission and Jon Nettle took over the chair position from Glen Craig.

Status of Service Requests

Responding to service requests is the single most time consuming and expensive aspect of our urban forestry operations. These requests pour in from a variety of sources including the 311 center, Fire and Police Departments, the Hamilton County Education Department, sister divisions within City Wide Services, and other City departments. In 2005 we switched software programs for tracking work orders. The Tree Manager software program was replaced by City Works which can be used throughout the entire Department of Public Works. In 2012 the 311 Call center records indicate that we received 1,123 requests as shown below and that we solved all except

four. The most current four years of information are provided for comparison.

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>
General Tree Problems	95	65	23	29
Fallen Trees and Branches	545	1,023	647	782
Tree Removal/Hazard	216	340	188	206
Tree Trimming	<u>267</u>	<u>257</u>	<u>320</u>	<u>267</u>
Totals	1,123	1,685	1,178	1,284

The Take Root Initiative

The Take Root project continued its tree planting endeavor in 2012. Take Root's goal has been to attain 15% tree canopy cover in the Expanded Central Business District (ECBD) in order to capitalize on the many benefits of a healthy urban forest. Trees are planted on City-owned rights-of-way, and the burden of their long term care lies on the Urban Forestry Department. To date there have been about 1595 trees planted through Take Root's efforts.

As usual, Take Root has leveraged partnerships with several organizations to accomplish its work. The Chattanooga Tree Commission, Volkswagen Group of America, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, neighborhood groups from Lookout Valley, and representatives of the Chattanooga National Cemetery all made significant contributions of time, energy, expertise and money in 2012.

Tree planting and care followed a normal annual routine of planting in the dormant season (November-February), followed by watering as needed during the hottest and driest parts of summer. While most trees are planted by our contract planter, the W.D. Scott Company, a significant number of trees were planted with volunteer labor this year. As part of the Arbor Day Celebration in March, 47 trees were planted at the John A. Patten Recreation Center in Lookout Valley. In early December, an additional 80 trees were planted with volunteers in the



Volunteer Tree Planting at the Patten Rec. Center in March.

Chattanooga National Cemetery. Planning these volunteer events requires quite a bit of coordination, but the result is a community more appreciative of Chattanooga's urban forest.

Take Root's Citizen Forester Program held a second season of educational classes focused on trees, their care and urban forestry in general. These classes serve as a conduit through

which the Urban Forestry Department can educate the public which is generally unaware of urban forestry issues. Four classes were held in various locations within the City in early fall. Classes were free of charge and open to the public. Like the previous year, three of these classes focused on tree biology, tree planting, tree care and urban forestry advocacy. The fourth class, however, was tailored to more advanced students. Topics in this advanced class included insects and diseases, trees and construction, etc. Classes were taught by volunteer arborists or other related professionals.

The Challenges Ahead

It is unclear if it is wise to look into the future. However those that fail to plan ahead deserve what they get.

The Citizen Forester educational initiative has been an unqualified success. There have been two years worth of classes which have been filled with excited and motivated students of all ages. In addition to the beginners class which taught basic tree care this year there was a graduate level class that focused in on tree protection during construction, trees and the law, hazard trees, and insects and diseases.

The new insect threat in the form of a non-native pest has a well established foothold in East Tennessee. The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) was discovered in eight new counties and one in Middle Tennessee. A new EAB Management Plan is being prepared for when the beetle arrives in Chattanooga. Even though only ash trees are affected there are an estimated 2,000 street trees and 200,000 privately owned trees at risk. Detection traps were set out in 2012 and more will be set out



The tiny Walnut Twig Beetle

in 2013. In addition to EAB the Thousand Cankers Disease (TCD) is a newly recognized disease (2008) of primarily Black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) and caused by a fungus, *Geosmithia morbida*, that is vectored into the tree by the Walnut Twig Beetle.

TCD has produced widespread death of black walnuts in many western states during the past decade and is also spreading through East Tennessee although it has not been found in Chattanooga.

A new management plan for Chattanooga is being written and will be completed in 2013. It will attempt to answer four basic questions:

1. What do we have?
2. What do we want?
3. How do we get what we want?
4. How do we know if we got it?

The Tree Commission is in the very early stages of looking at implementing a Heritage Tree program in some form. According to the Arbor Day Foundation, heritage trees are those that are important because of their great size, notable longevity, unusual form, location at the extreme of their natural growing range, or association with history.

And at the request of our Sister City of Hamm, Germany planning is underway to create a "Wedding Forest" in Chattanooga comparable to the one in Hamm. A Wedding forest is one in which trees are planted to commemorate a wedding. Although there are many obstacles and challenges with these proposals we are truly excited about the prospects that each of these opportunities offer.

Chattanooga, Department of Public Works

Our Business Address:
Department of Public Works
900 East 11th Street
Chattanooga, TN 37403

Phone: 423-757-7283
Fax: 423-757-5350
Email: hyde_gene@chattanooga.gov

We're on the Web!
WWW.Chattanooga.gov/urbanforestry

Chattanooga Tree Commission Members:

June Coppinger
Dr. Hill Craddock
Glen Craig
Adele Glascock
Lisa Lemza
Jon Nessle, Chair
Jan Pass
Sally Wencel

Administrator of Public Works:
Steve Leach

Director of City-Wide Services:
Jim Templeton

The Urban Forestry program functions as a separate operation within City Wide Services. Its mission is to provide the City with a safe and attractive urban forest, and to educate citizens about the benefits and proper care of trees. It is guided by the seven-member Tree Advisory Commission as appointed by the Mayor. The Forestry Division draws on other elements within both Public Works and Parks and Recreation to assist with tree planting, solving service requests, and other missions. The program's main operating budget for FY '11-'12 of \$706,040 is derived strictly from annual appropriations.

This report is prepared annually at the request of the Tree Advisory Commission.

Staff Happenings

In 2009 the Urban Forestry operations were expanded to include the Emergency Department.

Listed below are the current employees in their assigned sections:

Urban Forestry:

Tree Trimmers: Wayne Pinkerton and Jason Moree
Equipment Operator 4: Bruce Richie and Dexter Joshen
Crew Supervisor 2: Mike Richie and Jim Willson
Forestry Technician: Preston Roberts
Forestry Supervisor: Jerry Mauldin
City Forester: Gene Hyde

Emergency:

The Emergency Department has the responsibility for the removal of chemical spills along the roadway as well as dead animal pick-ups, litter pick-up, and discarded tires. They also are on call at night for fallen trees, pothole repair, and other mishaps that present a hazard to travelers along City streets. There is always a round-the-clock Emergency Department worker on duty every day of the year!

Workers include:

Crew Worker 1: Nathaniel Green, Gerald Harrington, Lydell Lovelace, Warren Tillson, Tyrone Wilkerson

Equipment Operator 1: Alvin Thomas, and Eric Cox

Equipment Operator 3: Van Johnson

Equipment Operator 4: Buddy Brown, Mike Compton, Pat Darr, Terry McCullough, Sherman Sales, Milton Stewart, and David Lanford.

In addition we have an Asplundh Crew that works with us for most of the year. This fine group of men is led by Crew Foreman, Eric Maynor.

