

PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY FORESTRY

2024 CONFERENCE



IMPLEMENTING A MASTER PLAN

3 Years In

PRESENTED BY:

ROSALIE HENDON

City Forester, City of Columbus (OH)
rfhendon@columbus.gov

RACHEL COMTE

Owner, Urban Canopy Works
rachel@urbancanopyworks.com



**COLUMBUS
URBAN
FORESTRY
MASTER PLAN**

Visit ColumbusUFMP.org



PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY FORESTRY 2024 CONFERENCE

About the Project

COLUMBUS UFMP

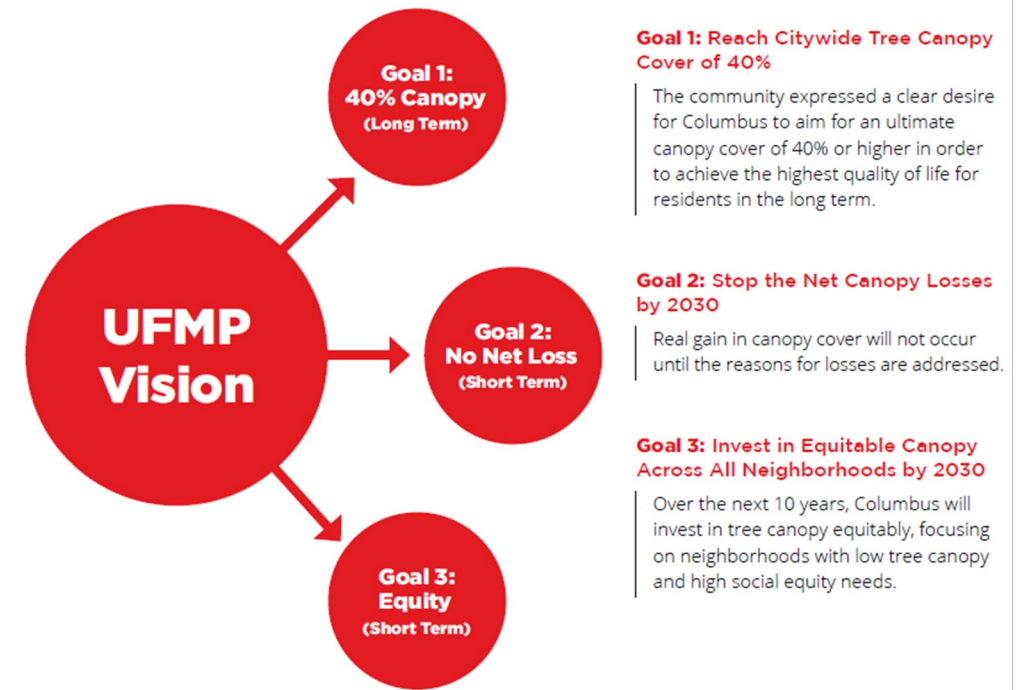
About the Plan

- Completed in 2021
- Three Years into Implementation - Progress!
- Team for Implementation

5 major implementation efforts to date:

- Inventory
- Canopy Data
- Public Tree Code
- Coalition
- Private Tree Code
- Leadership Role

GOALS



15 ACTION STEPS

- 1: Form a Team for Implementation: The Columbus Tree Coalition**
- 2: Create Messaging and Education Campaign for Use by All Partners
- 3: Improve Communications and Collaboration
- 4: Share Tree Data with the Community
- 5: Support Active Participation by Volunteers and Partner Organizations
- 6: Tree Planting: Prioritize Efforts Based on Equity
- 7: Ensure Space for Trees
- 8: Transition to a Proactive Care on Public Trees**
- 9: Create an Urban Forestry Best Practices Manual
- 10: Institute a Plan to Regularly Measure Progress, Reassess Next Steps
- 11: Identify Supplemental Funding Sources
- 12: Expand the Size and Scope of Urban Forestry Leadership**
- 13: Obtain and Maintain Updated Essential Tree Data**
- 14: Strengthen Private Tree Protection Policies on Private Property**
- 15: Improve Public Tree Protection Ordinance**

Progress in Implementation

STREET TREE INVENTORY

- Entire City right-of-way inventoried 2020-2022
- Over 125,000 street trees
- Over 96,000 planting sites
- Most trees in good condition
- Most planting sites (67%) suitable for medium/large tree
- Columbus' street trees are valued at \$248M
- Each of Columbus' 41 communities has an individual report on its street trees



STREET TREE INVENTORY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CITY OF COLUMBUS



PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2020, Columbus Recreation and Parks Department commissioned a pilot neighborhood street tree inventory and summary report for the South Linden community. In 2021, six more communities were inventoried and reports were created. In 2022, tree inventory data was collected for the rest of the city, with neighborhood reports complete in 2023 for a total of 41 reports. This tree inventory is a result of the citywide Urban Forestry Master Plan (UFMP).

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

The City of Columbus has an estimated population of 907,971 residents, which makes it the nation's 14th largest city. Columbus is one of the fastest growing cities in the midwestern United States, and population growth is expected to continue. The City's Department of Public Service maintains 5,678 road miles in Columbus. The current tree canopy cover in Columbus is 22%.

COLUMBUS' URBAN FOREST GOALS

- GOAL 1. 40% CITYWIDE CANOPY COVER (BY 2050)**
- GOAL 2. STOP NET CANOPY LOSS (BY 2030)**
- GOAL 3. EQUITABLE INVESTMENT (BY 2030)**

VISION FOR THE URBAN FOREST

To prioritize, preserve, and grow the tree canopy in Columbus equitably across neighborhoods, to improve health and quality of life for all residents.

URBAN FORESTRY MASTER PLAN ACTION STEPS

This citywide tree inventory directly addresses the following Action Steps in the City's UFMP.

- 1. Share Tree Data with the Community (Action Step 4)**
Neighborhood summary reports compile tree inventory data and suggestions for use by community members.
- 2. Tree Planting: Prioritize Efforts Based on Equity (Action Step 6)**
The tree inventory identified planting sites in each neighborhood. Using the existing Equity Score Rankings, this data will be used to prioritize equitable planting projects.
- 3. Obtain and Maintain Updated Essential Tree Data (Action Step 13)**
By inventorying every tree and planting space in the street right-of-way, CRPD now has updated data to use when making decisions regarding the management of the urban forest.

225,982 Sites Inventoried

.....

125,796 Trees	96,498 Planting Sites	3,688 Stumps
-------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------------



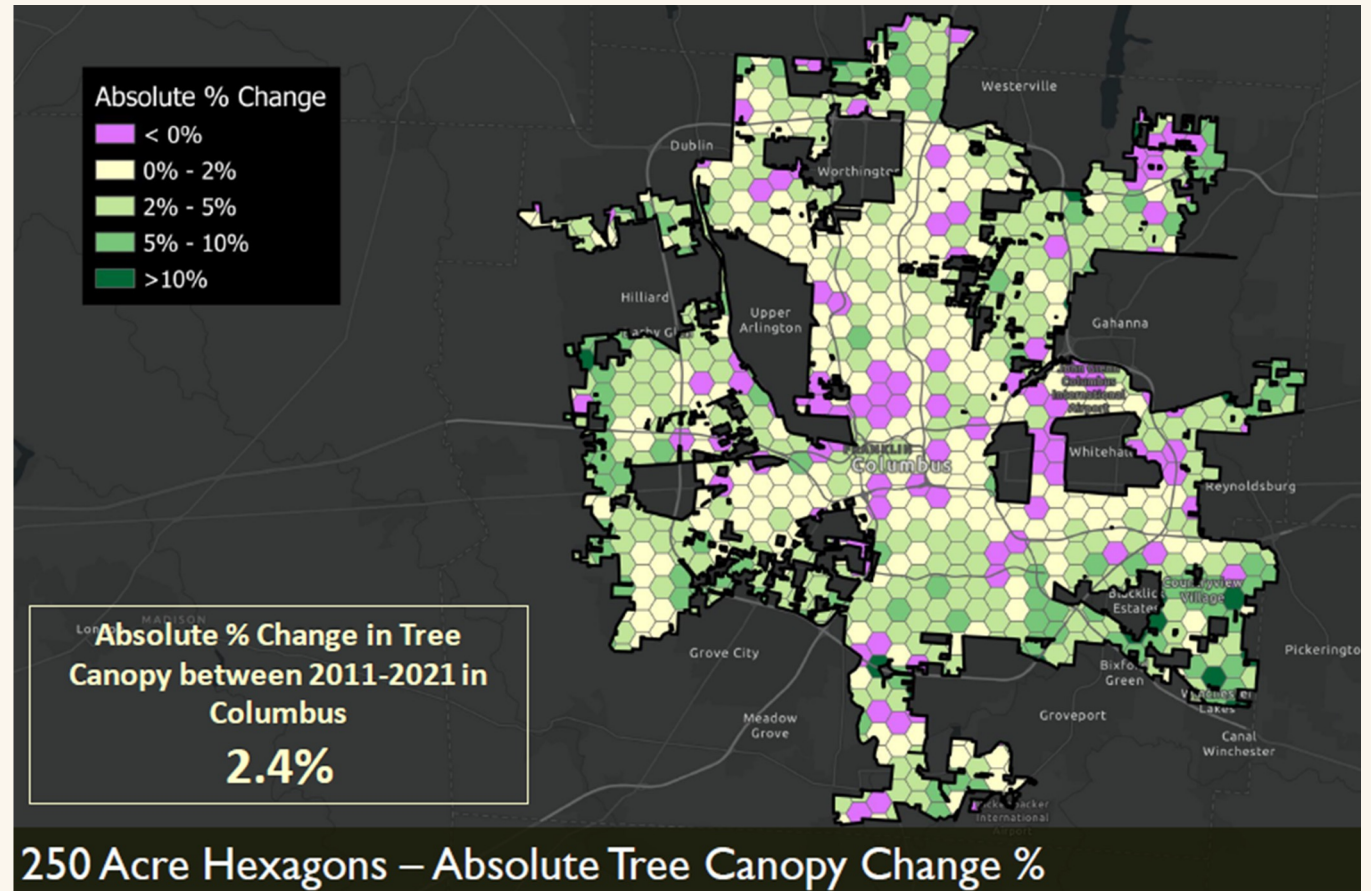
OVERALL CONDITION OF COLUMBUS' INVENTORIED TREES: GOOD

54% Good	41% Fair	4% Poor	1% Dead
--------------------	--------------------	-------------------	-------------------

Progress in Implementation

CANOPY ASSESSMENT

- Partnered with Franklin County agencies
 - \$125K from City, \$15K from County
- First county-wide assessment. Used imagery & LiDAR for 99% accuracy
- Growth! 2.4% increase in 10 years (19.6% to 22.0%)



Progress in Implementation

PUBLIC TREE CODE & MANUAL

- First update to code in 30 years
 - Stricter mitigation: inch-for-inch replantings, or fee-in-lieu
 - Mitigation required for all public tree removals
 - Permits and arborist inspections
- First Tree Technical Manual
- Lengthy process - over 80 meetings



TREE TECHNICAL MANUAL

 THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

RECREATION AND PARKS
DEPARTMENT

May 2024

Progress in Implementation

TREE COALITION

- No clear partner at outset = coalition need
- Setting it Up
 - Consultant time and expertise for initial meetings
 - Local nonprofit Green Columbus agreed to lead (2022)
 - City in a support/partner role
- Activities
 - Convened members in February 2024 to review public tree code
 - First Tree Summit at ArborFest, August 2024
 - Partnered with American Forests to create a Tree Equity Score Analyzer (TESA) for the County, 2023



Up next:

PRIVATE TREE CODE

- Starting with Research and Analysis as Phase 1
 - Researched 21 cities in US and Canada
 - In-depth interviews with four municipalities
 - Washington, DC
 - Seattle, WA
 - Charlotte, NC
 - Westerville, OH
 - Report on ordinance recommendations
 - Focus on private property development
- Phase 2 will be outreach & code drafting



Progress in Implementation

LEADERSHIP ROLE

UFMP identified need to expand size & scope of urban forestry leadership:

- High-level planning and coordination across city
- Leading UFMP implementation
- Develop & improve policies
- Clear communication
- Partnering with community groups

Rosalie as environmental planner, built relationships across city over time. Perfect in this “new” (but not new) role.



Takeaways

TO CONSIDER

- Not every community does things in the same order
- Implementation is messy
- A significant benefit to get help with implementation
- High level urban forester leadership is extremely helpful
- Planning process of UFMP gets buy in early on by larger community

COLUMBUS URBAN FORESTRY MASTER PLAN

Visit ColumbusUFMP.org

Thank you.

**COLUMBUS
URBAN
FORESTRY
MASTER PLAN**

Rosalie Hendon
City Forester, City of Columbus (OH)
rfhendon@columbus.gov

Rachel Comte
Owner, Urban Canopy Works
rachel@urbancanopyworks.com



PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY FORESTRY 2024 CONFERENCE