PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY FORESTRY

2024 CONFERENCE

Arbor Day Foundation™

EVALUATING YOUR PROGRAM: Methods, Insights and New Protocols

PRESENTED BY:

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PlanIT Geo™
developers of TreePlotter

AGENDA

Introduction

Experience and purpose of evaluating your program

Available Frameworks

Existing frameworks, tools, and approaches

Trends & Insights

Common strengths and gaps identified from 20+ audits

Impactful Changes

Examples of the resulting strategies and outcomes

Transition to New Protocols

Transitioning to SFI's Urban & Community Forestry Standard and others

Summary & Considerations

Recap of key information and thoughts for your own program no matter the status

INTRODUCTION

Background

Experience

Purpose

PlanIT Geo™
developers of TreePlotter

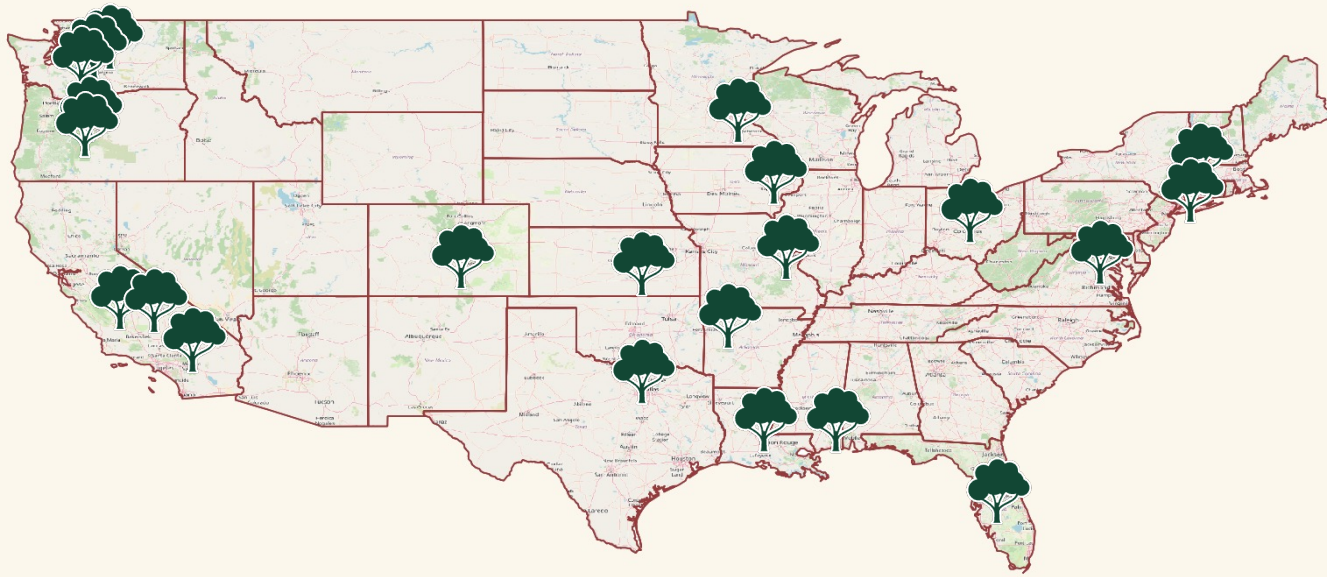
INTRODUCTION

Background

Experience

Purpose

Planning Projects



with Program Evaluations

INTRODUCTION

Background

Experience

Purpose

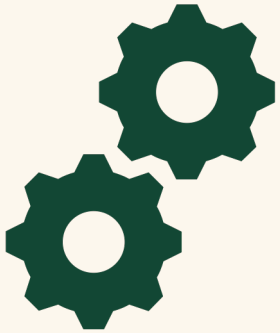
Document Status

Leverage Strengths

Resource Efficiencies

Performance Reports

Develop Strategies



Measure Impacts

FRAMEWORKS & RESOURCES

Considerations for evaluating your program

FRAMEWORKS & RESOURCES

Links to Resources
Scan Here

Examples of Urban & Community Forestry Program Evaluations

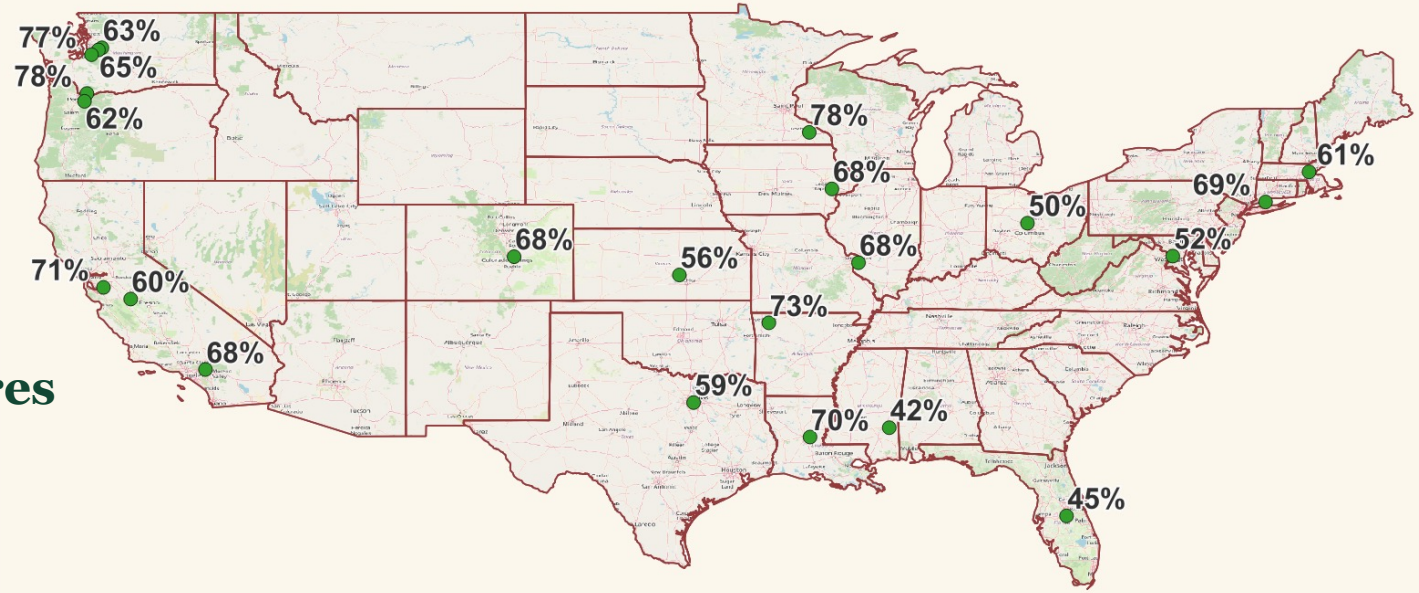
- A Model of Urban Forest Sustainability (Clark, et al., 1997)
- Criteria and Indicators for Strategic Urban Forest Planning and Management (Kenney, et al., 2011)
- Urban Forest Sustainability and Management Audit System (USFS, Abbot, et al., 2015)
- The Sustainable Urban Forest: A Step-by-Step Approach (USFS, Leff, et al., 2016)
- Community Assessment and Goal-setting Tool (Vibrant Cities Lab and partners)
- Indicators of a Sustainable Urban Forest (adapted by PlanIT Geo)
- Urban & Community Forest Sustainability Standard (Sustainable Forestry Initiative, 2024)

TRENDS & INSIGHTS

Strengths & gaps of 20+ audits, insights into programs

EVALUATION TRENDS

Evaluation Themes and Average Scores



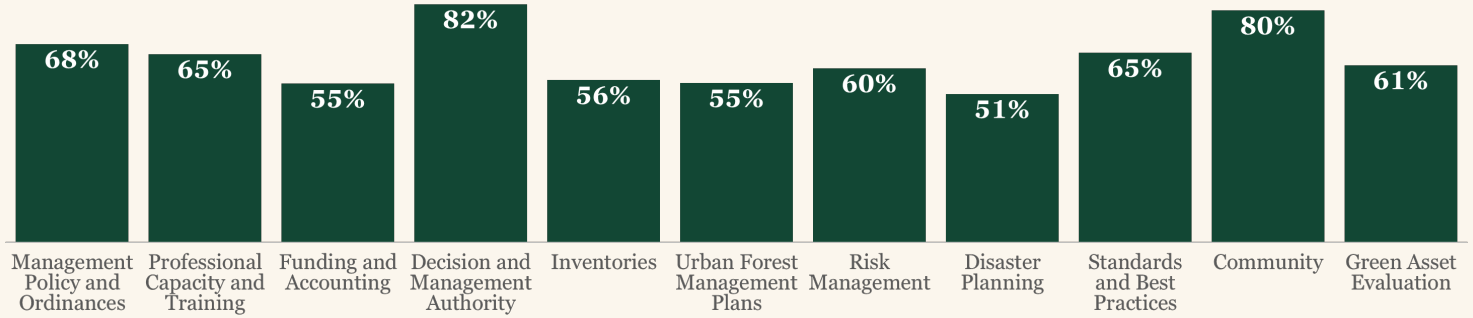
HIGHEST CATEGORIES

- Dedicated Staff Member (82%)
- Authority (82%)
- Community Frameworks (80%)

LOWEST CATEGORIES

- Funding (55%)
- Management Plans (55%)
- Disaster Planning (51%)

EVALUATION INSIGHTS



Program & Evaluation Factors Impacting Results

HIGHER SCORES

- Established Program & Staffing
- Existing Management Plan
- Proactive Public Tree Maintenance
- Supporting Plans & Policies
- Regional Impacts and/ or Local Opportunities

LOWER SCORES

- Lack of Formal Program
- Budget Undistinguished
- Competing Priorities
- Requirements Met
- Lack of Advisory Board and/or Community Partner

IMPACTFUL CHANGES

Strategies, programs, & outcomes resulting from program evaluations

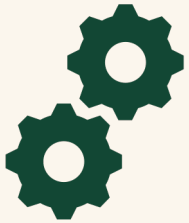
PROGRAM CHANGES & OUTCOMES

Identified Results of Conducting an Evaluation

TREES

- Planting & canopy cover
- Tree health
- Adequate growing space
- Tree protection & preservation
- Sustainability & resiliency
- Maximized ecosystem benefits

PROGRAMS



- Planting programs
- Proactive maintenance
- Increased funding & stability
- Pest & disease monitoring
- Invasive plant species management
- Coordination & efficiencies
- Risk management

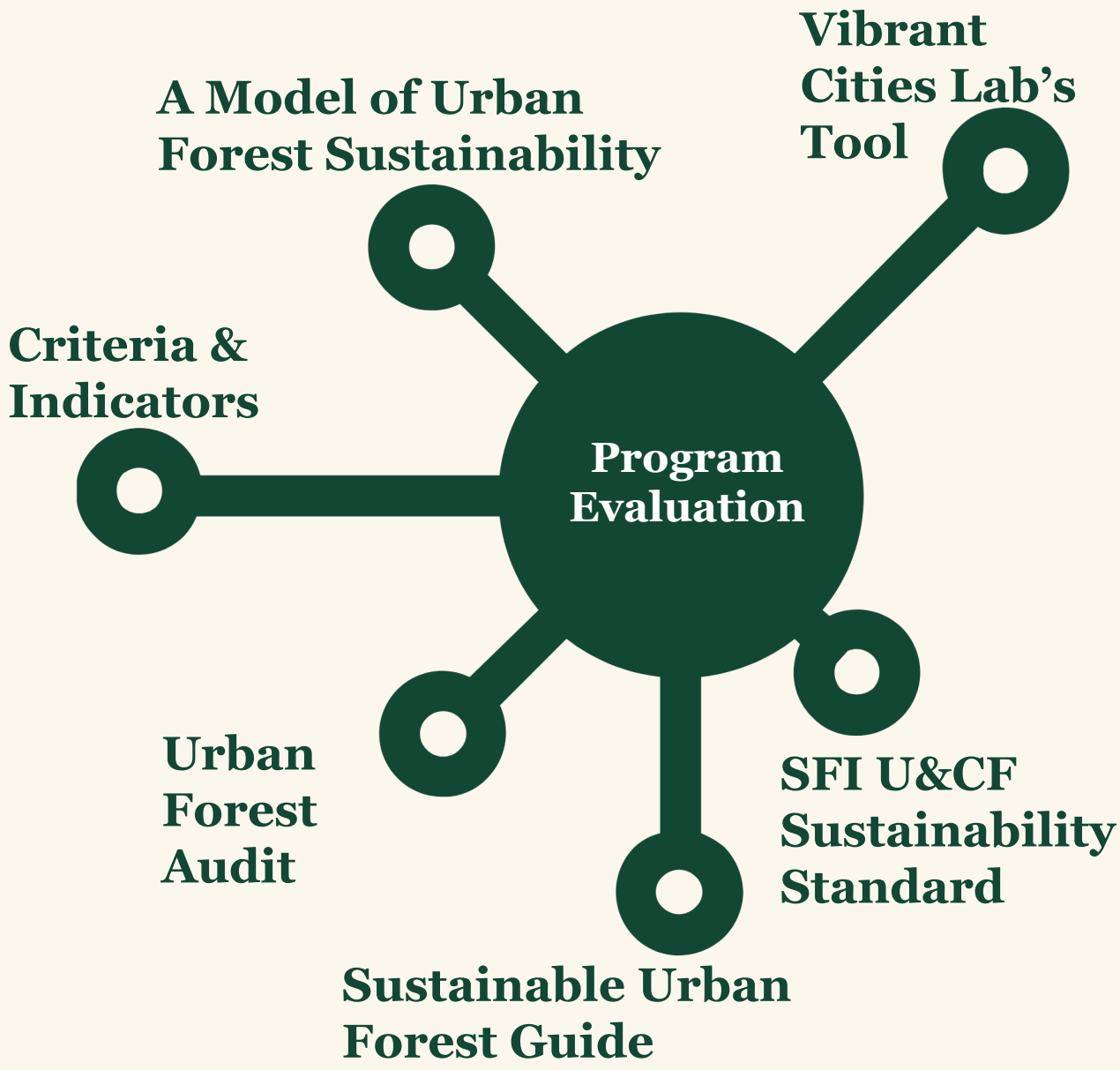
COMMUNITY

- Tree boards
- Tree City USA & other awards
- Tree stewardship
- Environmental justice
- Community organizations
- Collaborations & partnerships

NEW PROTOCOLS & TOOLS

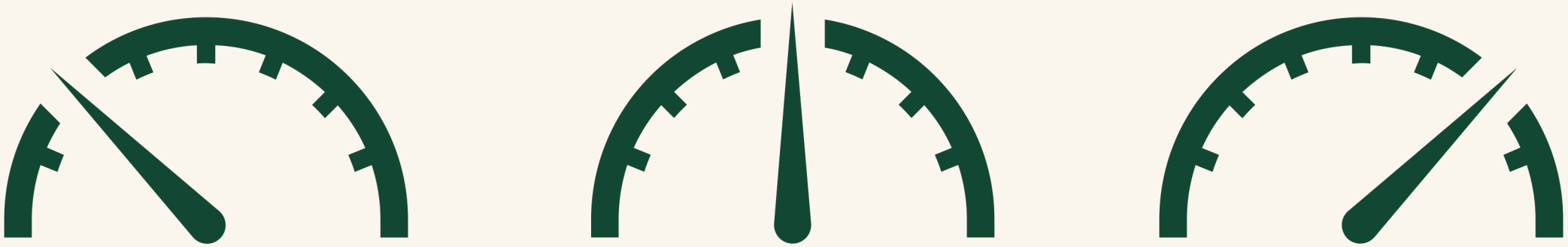
Integrating evaluations with new protocols & tools such as the SFI Urban & Community Forest Sustainability Standard

(www.forests.org/sfi-urban-forestry-standard)



CONSIDERATIONS

Recommendations Based on Evaluation Status



NO EVALUATION EXISTS

- Initial assessment
- Grant opportunities
- Determine approach
- Housekeeping
- Identify team

OUTDATED EVALUATION

- Update known changes
- Report progress
- Document methodology
- Evaluate available tools
- Narrow your focus

RECENT EVALUATION

- Focus on gaps
- Align with priorities
- Deep dives, benchmarking
- Establish strategies / programs
- Create / update plans

SUMMARY & CONSIDERATIONS

A recap of the presentation and recommendations for your community or program

Introduction

Available Frameworks

Trends & Insights

Impactful Changes

Transition to New Protocols

Summary & Considerations

Thank you!

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developers of TreePlotter

Scan the code to be directed to resources discussed today or visit PlanIT Geo's Resource Library:
https://planitgeo.com/urban-forestry-resource-library/