

# INTRODUCTION

## Purpose

Tree Pittsburgh and their partners developed this Urban Forest Master Plan for the City of Pittsburgh as well as for all who manage, protect, and plant trees. Our urban forest is comprised of all trees on private and public lands within the city boundaries; these trees improve the environment and make our city a more desirable place to live, work, and play. This plan provides detailed recommendations for the proactive management, protection, and growth of Pittsburgh's urban forest and describes a shared vision for the future of our urban forest to inspire and engage residents, business owners, elected officials, and community organizations. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Address environmental challenges.
- Coordinate a shared vision for the future of our urban forest.
- Develop baseline metrics and clear goals for urban forest managers.
- Cultivate lasting advocacy and increase civic participation.
- Facilitate efficiency and cooperation among all urban forest partners.

## Project Background

Tree Pittsburgh is a nonprofit, environmental organization dedicated to enhancing the City's vitality by restoring and protecting city trees. In the summer of 2010, Tree Pittsburgh launched Pittsburgh's Urban Forest Master Planning initiative—Trees for the Future. Tree Pittsburgh hosted a symposium, convening over 50 key stakeholders from Pittsburgh, the region, and the nation, to begin the work of creating a master plan for the urban forest. The symposium resulted in the development of a collaborative framework to make preliminary fundraising efforts and to form the Pittsburgh Urban Forest Master Planning Steering Committee.

To gain insight and to better inform the work being done in Pittsburgh, the Steering Committee evaluated the urban forest planning efforts in six other US cities. The Pittsburgh Urban Forest Master Planning Benchmarking Report provides a summary of the outcomes across key focus areas of the urban forest programs for the six cities studied: planning process, leadership, partnership, community, marketing, urban forest data analysis, and funding. [5]

In 2011, after a year of steady preparation and planning, the Steering Committee, led by Tree Pittsburgh, selected a project team to begin an intensive community outreach and education initiative and to create this Urban Forest Master Plan for protecting, growing, and maintaining our urban forest.

## Process

Developing an urban forest master plan requires continual assessment of what we have, what we want, how we get there, and how we are doing. The planning process requires input from many sources, thoughtful analysis, a coordinated vision, and time.



**What do we have?** The Urban Forest Management Framework section of this plan describes how our trees are currently managed and cared for by public agencies and stakeholder groups, and it provides an overview of existing urban forest plans. The 2012 State of the Urban Forest section summarizes data obtained from the street tree inventory and management plan, the park tree inventory, the municipal forest resource analysis, the i-Tree ecosystem analysis, and the urban tree canopy analysis. [1,2,3,4,6]

**What do we want?** A comprehensive, public outreach campaign was designed to engage stakeholders and to identify key issues. The results were used to formulate and clarify the overall shared vision for the future of our urban forest.

**How do we get there?** keystones of urban forestry and the goals for achieving the 20-year vision for the urban forest are established. Recommendations are developed from careful review of 15 urban forestry management issues. Case studies are presented to illustrate successful implementation of these recommendations.

**How are we doing?** Continual monitoring will be needed to measure the progress towards established goals. Recommendations are categorized by stakeholder groups so that all who care for our urban forest can work toward achieving a unified vision. As progress is made, further evaluation will be needed to refine the future goals of the urban forest program.