

Town of Springfield, Vermont

Urban Forest Strategic Action Plan

Town Manager: Tom Yennerell

Public Works Department
Director: Jeff Strong

Tree Warden: Mark Blanchard

Compiled by:
Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program
Andrea Urbano, Elise Schadler

This plan made possible through funding from the USDA
Forest Service



August 2016

Project Overview

About the Care of the Urban Forest Project

In 2013 Vermont's Urban and Community Forestry Program (VT UCF) received a multi-year grant from the USDA Forest Service to assist twenty priority communities in Vermont in moving their public tree programs forward. The project, *Care of the Urban Forest*, is an effort that aims to support these communities in three specific ways, by: (1) conducting a public tree inventory to assess urban forest structure, diversity, and health; (2) helping the community in the development of an urban forest management plan or strategic action plan, using information from the inventory; and (3) providing technical training for municipal employees and key volunteers to increase in-house capacity to manage and promote the proper care of public trees. Springfield's Care of the Urban Forest project was initiated in the spring of 2015, was coordinated with the Black River Action Team (BRAT) Director, Kelly Stettner and was advised and approved by the Town Manager, Tom Yennerell.

Importance of planning

Planning is key to effective management of any program. Good plans make the difference between cost-effective, pro-active management and costly, reactive crisis management. Plans establish focus and direction. They provide the framework for program implementation and a basis for consistent decision making. They are tools for determining budgets and other support needs.

Benefits provided by trees

The trees in our communities offer a wide variety of environmental, social, and economic benefits to the surrounding community, including but not limited to: stormwater mitigation, carbon dioxide (CO₂) sequestration and storage, air quality improvement, shade, wildlife habitat, and aesthetic value. For more information about the benefits provided by trees, visit vtcommunityforestry.org/resources/benefits-trees.

Purpose and scope of Plan

Through the creation of this Plan, VT UCF is satisfying the second Care of the Urban Forest Project objective for the Town of Springfield. Through the implementation of this Plan, Springfield seeks to maximize the benefits of its urban forest to steward and promote its ecological integrity and diversity.

Applicability and administration

This plan applies throughout the Town of Springfield's inventoried 91 municipal managed streets and 7 public greenspaces. It also applies to newly planted public trees. The Town Tree Warden, under the direction of the Town Selectboard and with assistance from the Public Works Department and BRAT Director, Kelly Stettner, will be responsible for implementing this Plan and seeing that program provisions are carried out.

Vision of Urban Forest

Springfield has a long-term vision of a predominately native and genera-diverse urban forest efficiently and effectively maintained by the Town Tree Warden, volunteer citizens, and the Dept. of Public Works for good quality and longevity. Springfield also envisions a public tree program that works with developers to incorporate trees and greenspaces into infrastructure and developments.

In order to reach this vision, the Town has established the following short-term (2017-2021) action steps (although some may be ongoing) and long-term goals (2022 and beyond):

Short-term action steps:

1. Recruit and appoint an interested and informed Tree Warden to actively engage and promote the Town's community forest program (**March 2018**).
2. Acquire/purchase set of the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) best management practices or the A300 Standards for Tree Care for the use of the Public Works Department and Tree Warden (**June 2017**).
 - a. These are available for purchase and accessible here: <http://tcia.org/business/ansi-a300-standards>.
3. Remove, and replace if appropriate, the 37 dead trees inventoried (**August 2021**).
 - a. As of 2015, **16** of these dead trees were between 6" and 12" at DBH and another **16** were between 12" and 16" at DBH.
 - b. Prioritize the removal of the **7** dead trees inventoried within **public school grounds**.
4. Assess the 367 trees identified as in need of monitoring during the inventory by a Certified Arborist or the Town Tree Warden (**August 2020**).
5. Conduct community outreach and education to engage citizens in proper tree care and planting practices, to avoid the spread of non-native invasive species, and to catalyze a citizen tree steward network (**annual and ongoing**).
 - a. Collaborate with the Black River Action Team (BRAT) and the Ottauquechee Natural Resource Conservation District (ONRCD) (Appendix A) to host annual Arbor Day celebrations. Arbor Day is the first Friday of May.
 - b. Work with BRAT and Springfield Trails and Greenways (Appendix A) to host annual fundraising and volunteer tree planting events. BRAT can also assist in grant-seeking, public tree maintenance and monitoring, and public outreach.
6. Create and enact a Springfield Tree Ordinance (**August 2021**).
7. Apply for VT UCF annual grant (see below) to support the implementation of community forest action steps and to leverage future funding (**Annually in April and ongoing**).
8. Inform key stakeholders (Appendix A) of the creation of this Plan (**August 2017**).

9. Meet with Green Mountain Power (Appendix A) to inform them of the Town's new plan and specifically the 60 plus trees inventoried as in conflict with power lines (Contact by **August 2017**, pruning to be completed by **December 2019**).
10. Update 2015 inventory data (**annually by December 31st**).
 - a. The Tree Warden will update **tree removal, condition changes, and new tree planting** data directly in the Microsoft Excel 2015 inventory megadata file and will send to Elise Schadler of VT UCF, at elise.schadler@uvm.edu and all invested bodies involved in urban forest management (e.g., the Dept. of Public Works)
 - b. Elise will communicate with Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) directly to update the data displayed in ANR's online atlas.
 - c. Regular maintenance records should be established and maintained in house.

ANR Caring for Canopy Grant Program

State 50:50 grants to help communities care for tree canopy by taking the necessary actions to developing and sustaining a community-wide tree program, including tree plantings, inventories, maintenance, and planning. Details on website.

Range: \$500 - \$5,000. Local match of 50%.

Eligibility: Municipalities and non-profits associations.

Deadline: Annually in April

Contact: Danielle Fitzko, (802) 598-9992 danielle.fitzco@state.vt.us

Website:

http://fpr.vermont.gov/forest/community_forests/community_canopy_grants

Long-term goals:

1. Establish a systematic annual planting schedule (**August 2022**).
 - a. Visit and assess the 155 vacant locations potentially suitable for future tree plantings by a Certified Arborist or the Town Tree Warden. Eliminate or disregard sites deemed unsuitable for tree plantings.
 - b. Plant **10 trees a year** to increase the public tree population and ensure age and species diversity using the Tree Selection guide (Appendix E) to choose suitable species.
 - c. Increase genera and species diversity of urban forest by strategically choosing native tree species for all future plantings. When selecting trees for plantings, choose species outside of the *Acer* (maple), *Malus* (crabapple), or *Fraxinus* (ash) genera.
 - d. Prioritize plantings on **Commonwealth Avenue, Clinton Street, and Park Street**, as they require the greatest need for canopy cover
2. Establish a systematic annual tree maintenance (e.g., pruning and visual assessment) schedule (**August 2022**). Specifically:

- a. Visit each public tree every **seven years** to conduct necessary maintenance.
 - b. Prioritize maintenance of the **278 trees** considered as in “fair” or “poor” condition during the inventory. Begin efforts at the **Springfield High School** and **Riverside Middle School**, and on **Clinton Street**.
 - c. Supplement maintenance costs by working with Green Mountain Power to ensure pruning of the over **60 trees** explicitly noted to be in conflict with power lines is done according to TCIA’s best management practices.
3. Establish a Town Tree Committee or Board responsible for working with the Tree Warden in ensuring this Plan is implemented and the tree program is supported (**August 2022**).
 - a. The Town Tree Warden should serve on this Committee.
 - b. This Committee is recommended to establish, promote, and maintain the Tree Stewardship Program (see below).
4. Establish a Tree Stewardship Program comparable to that of Branch Out Burlington’s Tree Keeper Program (<http://branchoutburlington.org/get-involved/burlington-tree-keeper-program>) (**August 2022**, to be utilized and promoted **annually thereafter**).
5. Create a tree Pest Preparedness Plan to help the Town effectively and efficiently prepare for the arrival of the emerald ash borer, which will serve as a template for any future invasive tree pest threats (**January 2023**).
6. Work with the Town’s Development Review Board and Planning Commission (Appendix A) to incorporate native tree plantings and greenspaces in all future infrastructure and development (**annual** and **ongoing**).

For a copy of the Town of Springfield’s 2015 public tree inventory, or for detailed information about funding resources, tree planting selection guidance, tree care, writing a tree ordinance, or for technical assistance related to the short-term action steps or long-term goals detailed in this Plan, visit: <http://vtcommunityforestry.org> or contact Elise Schadler at: elise.schadler@uvm.edu.

Appendix A. Key Stakeholders

Reference the table below to contact the key stakeholders in the Town of Springfield.
Keep track of your communication by checking off stakeholders as they are informed.

Stakeholder	Main contact and title	Contact info	Informed?
Department of Public Works	Jeff Strong, Director	Email: dpwjeff@vermontel.net Phone: 802-886-2208	<input type="checkbox"/>
Department of Public Works	John Johnson, Road Foreman	Email: pwdept@vermontel.net Phone: 802-886-2208	<input type="checkbox"/>
Town Tree Warden	Mark Blanchard		<input type="checkbox"/>
Department of Parks and Recreation	Andy Bladyka, Director	Email: springfieldrec@hotmail.com Phone: 802-885-2727	<input type="checkbox"/>
Department of Parks and Recreation	Keith Eno, Assistant Director	Email: kenospringfieldrec@gmail.com Phone: 802-885-2727	<input type="checkbox"/>
Town Clerk & Treasurer	Barbara Courchesne	Email: tosclerk@vermontel.net Phone: 802-885-2104	<input type="checkbox"/>
Town Manager	Tom Yennerell	Email: tosmanager@vermontel.net Phone: 802-885-2104	<input type="checkbox"/>
Town Selectboard	Kristi Morris, Chair (2017)	Email: k.morris51@outlook.com Phone: 802-885-2949	<input type="checkbox"/>
Town Selectboard	Stephanie Thompson, Vice Chair (2016)	Email: Gibson.stephanie27@gmail.com Phone: 802-885-5287	<input type="checkbox"/>
Town Cemetery Commission	Hugh Putnum	Email: putnams@vermontel.net Phone: 802-885-8430	<input type="checkbox"/>
Town Development Review Board	Joseph Wilson, Chair (2017)	Email: breezyhill@vermontel.net Phone: 802-885-2811	<input type="checkbox"/>
Town Planning Commission	Wilbur Horton, Chair (2017)	Email: Whorton67@yahoo.com , toszoning@vermontel.net Phone: 802-885-5507	<input type="checkbox"/>

Commented [AU1]: Tom or Kelly - can you please enter the contact information for Mark? Thanks!

Garden Club	Diana Dexter, President (04/2017)	Phone: 802-885-5812 Contact via website: http://springfieldgardenclub.org/Contact.php	
Springfield Trails and Greenways	Ethan McNaughton	Email: emcnaughton@gwlpc.com	
Springfield Trails and Greenways	Christian Craig	Email: ccraig@myreccenter.org	
Black River Action Team	Kelly Stettner, Director	blackrivercleanup@yahoo.com http://www.BlackRiverActionTeam.org	□
Ascutney Mountain Audubon Society	Alma Beals, Secretary	Email: almabeals@gmail.com	
River Valley Technical Center	John Harmer, Horticultural Program	Phone (h): 802-885-3926 Email: jharmer@rvtc.org	
Springfield Regional Development Corp.	Bob Flint, Regional Director	Email: bofb@springfielddevelopment.org Phone: 802-885-3061	
Ottawaquechee Natural Resources Conservation District	Larry Kasden, Chair	Email: ONRCD1@gmail.com Website: http://onrcd.org/Index.html	
South Windsor County Regional Planning Commission	Thomas Kennedy, Executive Director	Email: tkennedy@swcrpc.org Phone: 802-647-9201 ext. 115	
Green Mtn. Power	Dan Austin, Springfield Service Center	Email: dan.austin@greenmountainpower.com Phone: 802-886-3309	
County Forester	Sam Schneski	Email: sam.schneski@vermont.gov Phone: 802-885-8823	
District Forester	Rick White	Email: rick.white@state.vt.us Phone: 802-885-8824	

Appendix B. Action step checklist and costs

Action Step	Targeted date of completion	Estimated associated costs	Date completed	Funds spent (\$)	Notes
Short-term Action Steps					
1. Recruit and appoint active Tree Warden	March 2018	Staff time			
2. Acquire TCIA BMPs or A300 Standards	June 2017	\$200			
3. Remove 37 dead trees	7 trees by August 2017 and 2018 9 trees by August 2019 and 2020 5 by August 2021	\$5,600 in 2017 and in 2018, \$7,200 in 2019 and in 2020, \$4,000 in 2021 Total: \$29,600*			
4. Assess 367 trees in need of monitoring	August 2020	TBD or staff/volunteer time			
5. Community outreach, education, fundraising, planting + Arbor Day Celebration	Annual and ongoing, Arbor Celebrations in May	Staff/volunteer time, \$100-\$500/year optional for event supplies			
6. Create and enact Tree Ordinance	August 2021	Staff/volunteer time			
7. Apply for VT UCF grant	April annually	Staff/volunteer time			
8. Inform stakeholders of this Plan's creation	December 2017	Staff/volunteer time			
9. Contact Green Mtn. Power and contract pruning of 60 trees in conflict of utility wire	Contact: August 2017 Pruning: December 2019	\$0.00			
10. Update 2015 inventory data & send to Elise and Public Works	December 31 st , annually	Staff/volunteer time			

*Based on an estimated average cost of \$800.00 per dead tree removal, as provided by the Town's Public Works Department. This cost will vary based on the condition and size of each dead tree, the number of trees being removed in one visit, and the entity removing the trees.

Appendix C. Relevant contacts

Representing Role/Responsibility	Name	Contact
Town Manager	Tom Yennerell	802-885-2104 tosmanager@vermontel.net
Town Tree Warden	Mark Blanchard	
Dept. Public Works Director	Jeff Strong	802-886-2208 dpwjeff@vermontel.net
Dept. Public Works Road Forman	John Johnson	802-886-2208 pwdept@vermontel.net
Dept. Parks and Recreation Director	Andy Bladyka	802-885-2727 springfieldrec@hotmail.com
Dept. of Parks and Recreation Assistant Director	Keith Eno	802-885-2727 kenospringfieldrec@gmail.com
Town Clerk and Treasurer	Barbara Courchesne	802-885-2104 tosclerk@vermontel.net
Town Selectboard Chair (2017)	Kristi Morris	802-885-2949 k.morris51@outlook.com
Town Cemetery Commission	Hugh Putnam	802-885-8430 putnams@vermontel.net
Town Development Review Board Chair (2017)	Joseph Wilson	802-885-2811 breezyhill@vermontel.net
Town Planning Commission Chair (2017)	Wilbur Horton	802-885-5507 Whorton67@yahoo.com
Springfield Regional Development Corp. Director	Bob Flint	802-885-3061 bobf@springfielddevelopment.org
ONRCD Chair	Larry Kasden	http://onrcd.org/Index.html ONRCD1@gmail.com
SWCRPC Executive Director	Thomas Kennedy	802-647-9201 ext. 115 tkennedy@swcrpc.org
Town Finance Department Head	Cathy Sohngen	802-885-2104 tosfinance@vermontel.net
Local ISA Certified Arborists	Kevin Shrader, Westminster	All Seasons Tree Service: 802-722-3008 bandkshr@comcast.net
	Jason Eaton, Woodstock	Chippers, Inc.: 802-457-5100 Jason@chippersinc.com
	Bob Everingham, Brattleboro	All About Trees: 802-579-3084 bob@all-about-trees.com

	Leon Stevens, Claremont, NH	Stevens Forestry Corp: 603-542-7617 stevensforestry@myfairpoint.net
ISA Arborist Certification information	N/A	1-888-427-8733 isa@isa-arbor.com
Tree City USA Designation information	Arbor Day Foundation	1-888-448-7337 https://www.arborday.org/programs/tree-cityusa/index-become.cfm
ISA Certified Arborist Preparatory Course	Heather Leff, New England Chapter	978-844-0441 heather@newenglandisa.org
VT UCF Technical Assistance Coordinator	Elise Schadler	802-656-2657 elise.schadler@uvm.edu
VT UCF Outreach Specialist	Gwen Kozlowski	Gwen.kozlowski@uvm.edu
District Urban Forester, VT FPR	Rick White	802-885-8824 rick.white@state.vt.us
County Forester, VT FPR	Sam Schneski	802-885-8823 sam.schneski@vermont.gov
Northern Nurseries, White River Junction	Dana Spaulding, Sales Rep.	802-295-2117 http://www.robertbaker.com/northern_index.htm dspaulding@northernnurseries.com
Henderson's Tree Service	N/A	802-296-3771 http://hendersonstreeservice.com/vermont-tree-services/tree-planting-services/
Woodbury's Landscaping- Garden, N. Springfield	N/A	802-886-8316
Morning Star Perennial Farm, Bellows Falls	Laurie & Scott Bolotin	802-463-3433 info@morningstarflowers.com
Branch Out Burlington!	Margaret Skinner	802-656-5440 http://branchoutburlington.org
Hartford Tree Board, Chair	Deborah Milne	802-272-9020 ythartfordtreeboard@gmail.com
Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District	N/A	802-778-3178 http://winooskinrcd.org/trees-and-trout-sale-2016/ info@winooskinrcd.org
TREEage	Marie Ambusk	802-999-1126 http://www.treeage.org/Home marie.ambusk@gmail.com
The Intervale Center Conservation Nursery	Mike Ingalls	802-660-0440 ext. 114 http://www.intervale.org/what-we-do/intervale-conservation-nursery/ mikei@intervale.org

