

Community Forestry Management Plan

2026 - 2030
for
West Windsor Township
Mercer County, New Jersey

Prepared by the

WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP SHADE TREE COMMISSION

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In consultation with Daniel Dobromilsky & Assoc.

ADOPTED: _____, 2026

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT - 9/16/26

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Community Forestry Management Plan

Introduction

A community forest can be defined as the woody landscape plants that exist in a locale. For this document, our community forest shall be defined as the landscape plants that occur on all public properties, particularly including the trees that line streets within the public right-of-way, commonly known as street trees. The focus of our community forest is the trees, but it is recognized that understory shrubs and perennial plants are a significant part of the complete ecosystem that encompasses the public landscape and thus these plantings will also be recognized as an element of the Community Forest.

Acknowledging the contribution shade trees and community forest make to a community, and the necessity to nurture, protect and manage a vigorous community forest resource, the State Legislature passed the New Jersey Shade Tree and Community Forestry Assistance Act on December 5, 1996.

This Act enables New Jersey's communities to reduce or eliminate their exposure to litigation due to the drastic decline and poor condition of the community tree resource. The basis for this protection is a properly planned community forestry program implemented through a State approved management plan with municipal participation in the State training and accreditation program.

This Community Forestry Management Plan (henceforth referenced as CFMP) is an essential guide to successfully foster a healthy and safe community forest. To encourage and guide the continuation and expansion of reactive, proactive and efficient practices, the West Windsor Township Shade Tree Commission (henceforth referenced as STC) has developed this fifth edition of its CFMP plan. The process to develop our latest CFMP includes a review and analysis of the fourth edition of our CFMP, review of the updated and published guidance documents from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (henceforth known as NJDEP) and analysis of the current condition of our community forest based upon readily available data. In response to these reviews, the STC has established goals, objectives, and guidelines for future planting and maintenance of our community forest. Implementation of the CFMP objectives will enhance the livable nature and prosperity of this community. The managed community forest will improve aesthetics, civic pride, environmental quality, and climatic conditions, and thereby improve the general welfare of the community. In addition, this CFMP will result in a decrease in hazardous tree situations along with long-term management of tree maintenance and associated costs.

The NJDEP's Urban and Community Forestry Division administers the New Jersey Shade Tree and Community Forestry Act, and that division published guidelines to develop an updated CMFP and established requirements that must be included for a CFMP to be acceptable to NJDEP. This CFMP has been prepared to be consistent with all NJDEP's guidance, tailored to the community forest of West Windsor Township.

The West Windsor Township Shade Tree Commission is honored to present this CFMP to the Mayor, for his approval, to the Township Council for their information and to the citizens for their support in helping the larger community treasure our shade trees.

Month 1, 2026

Mayor, Hemant Marathe and
West Windsor Township Council
271 Clarksville Road
West Windsor, NJ 08550

RE: Community Forestry Management Plan

Dear Mayor and Council:

The Shade Tree Commission (STC) is pleased to announce that, in accordance with the duties promulgated to the Shade Tree Commission by Ordinance, and the guidelines established under the New Jersey Shade Tree and Community Forestry Assistance Act, we have prepared and adopted this fifth edition Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP) for West Windsor Township. This plan covers the years 2026 to 2030 and establishes the Township's community forestry goals and objectives.

The process of developing this CFMP included a review and analysis of the Township's community forest resource based upon available data. In response to this review, the STC has established goals, objectives, and action items for the future planting, maintenance, protection, and expansion of the community forest. Implementation of this CFMP is expected to enhance the livable character and prosperity of the Township, improve aesthetics, civic pride, environmental quality, and climatic conditions, and reduce hazardous tree conditions along with the long-term costs of tree maintenance and removal. In short, this CFMP will help our township maintain a sustainable, productive living forest resource for our community.

Acknowledging the contribution that shade trees and the community forest make to a community, and the need to nurture, protect, and manage a vigorous community forest resource, the New Jersey State Legislature passed the New Jersey Shade Tree and Community Forestry Assistance Act on December 5, 1996 (N.J.S.A. 13:1L-17.1 et seq.), and Public Law (N.J.S.A. 59:4-10). The Act and Law enable communities to reduce their exposure to liability associated with the condition of the community tree resource, and actions of the Shade Tree Commission and volunteers, where that reduction is grounded in a properly planned community forestry program implemented through a State-approved management plan, together with municipal participation in the State's training and accreditation program. Upon acceptance of this CFMP the Township will be eligible for future grants to fund the various programs and activities necessary to implement this plan.

This CFMP is West Windsor Township's principal policy and planning document concerning trees, woodlands, canopy cover, and community forestry activities. This CFMP is considered a living document that informs and supports decision-making throughout West Windsor Township government. Trees and woodlands are affected by decisions involving development, roads, sidewalks, utilities, housing, parks, stormwater management, open space, and municipal budgeting and state and federal requirements. Accordingly, this CFMP should be routinely consulted by Township boards, commissions, departments, officials, staff, and professionals whose work may affect trees, woodlands, canopy cover, or community forestry objectives.

Thank You,

_____, Chair
West Windsor Township Shade Tree Commission

cc: Shade Tree Commissioners
Township Council

Municipal/County Information Form

Municipality: West Windsor Township

County: Mercer County, New Jersey

Address: 271 Clarksville Road
West Windsor Township, NJ 08550

Contact Name and Title: Mr. Francis Guzik, Township Engineer

Phone #: (609-799-2400)

E-mail: Fguzik@westwindsortwp.gov

Organization's Name: West Windsor Township – Shade Tree Commission

Mayor's Signature: _____
Hemant Marathe, Mayor

Date of Submission: ?? / ?? / ???

Time Period Covered: 2026 – 2030

Official Use Only

The above-named municipality has made formal application to the New Jersey Forestry Service. I am pleased to advise you that after our review, the NJ Forestry Service has concluded that this plan meets the standards set forth by the State and NJ Community Forestry Council and is approved for the period covered.

Signed: _____

State Forester, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protections

Approval Date

COMMUNITY FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN

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I. Mission, Liability, and Background

1. Mission Statement

West Windsor Township and the West Windsor Township Shade Tree Commission shall act to maintain and grow the Community Forest as a sustainable, productive, living resource enhancing community aesthetic and environmental quality and thereby improving the physical health, social well-being and economic vitality for township residents and their properties.

To accomplish this mission, the STC, the Environmental Commission, the Township Landscape Architect, and the Public Works Department work together advising the Mayor, Township Council, Township Administrator, Planning Board and Zoning Board and implementing programs and tasks.

The STC shall adopt a CFMP to establish appropriate policy and procedures to guide township officials, staff and community volunteers with the implementation of rules, regulations and actions necessary to uphold this mission.

2. Liability Statement

The community forest, including street, park and open space trees, as well as greenbelt or preserve woodlands, endows the community with numerous aesthetic, environmental and economic benefits. Trees inevitably mature, and retention of these benefits require care, maintenance, and eventual replacement. The community forest can impose dramatic costs upon a municipality if not properly managed. These costs are most obvious when poorly maintained trees cause damage and inconvenience in the aftermath of a storm. Care and maintenance, in addition to planting the appropriate tree in the right place, can help ensure that community trees, as a resource, not only contribute to the aesthetic, environmental and economic vitality of the area, but also limit the potential of these trees to become hazards to public safety. Poor decision-making and maintenance will lead to premature tree removal and replacement incurring an inefficient expenditure of community efforts and funds. Proper management will control and reduce costs to the community.

It is the intent of this CFMP to focus available resources on the greatest need and procedurally work toward the creation and maintenance of a healthy forest. This will result in commensurate reductions in risk to public safety. However, the community must work within a reasonable budget that will not be able to immediately meet each and every community forest concern. Therefore, present time and monetary expenditures must be focused.

The goals and objective established in this CFMP will help garner public support for implementation of the plan actions providing demonstrative long-term benefits.

By establishing procedures to review tree requests and to inventory the community forest, including hazard assessment, the STC shall attempt to foster implementation of corrective action prior to structural tree failure and other hazardous tree-related conditions. It is acknowledged that not all hazardous conditions can be detected or predicted. Proper planning, maintenance and care should reduce the probability of property damage or inconvenience, but unexpected events will occur.

Implementing this CFMP will demonstrate that West Windsor Township is devoting reasonable levels of resources, in a planned manner, to reduce tree-related accidents and thereby reduce exposure to liabilities and promote public safety, health and the general welfare, while providing certain immunities to the Township Shade Tree Commissioners and volunteers, consistent with the New Jersey Shade Tree and Community Forestry Assistance Act (N.J.S.A. 13:1L-17.1 et seq.) and NJ Public Law (N.J.S.A. 59:4-10).

3. Community Overview

a. Community and Forestry Overview, History and Accomplishments

The Township of West Windsor lies centrally on the eastern border of Mercer County. It is surrounded by Princeton Township to the north, by Plainsboro Township and East Windsor Townships to the east, by Robbinsville Township to the south, and Hamilton and Lawrence Townships to the west.

By highway mileage, West Windsor is nearly equidistant from New York City, New York, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This central location, together with the Township's flat terrain and fertile soils, made West Windsor a prime location for early colonial settlement and agricultural production, and later established the township within a major suburban transportation corridor.

Local land acquisition began in the 1690s, with prominent individuals such as William Penn and David Lyell (the namesakes of our Penn-Lyle Road), and others buying thousands of acres of land. Before that, the area was the territory of the indigenous Leni Lenape. These indigenous people were hunters, fishers, and agriculturalists.

In 1731, the area was known as New Windsor Township and it included East Windsor, Princeton Township, Princeton Borough, Hightstown, Robbinsville and portions of Millstone and Monroe townships. In 1737, much of the area was sold by William Penn's heirs to the Schenk and Covenhoven families, who were farmers of Dutch descent. In 1751, the area became known as the Township of Windsor. Today's Princeton downtown was our downtown and was a part of West Windsor during the establishment of Princeton University. The battlefield that was the scene of the victorious Battle of Princeton on January 3, 1777 during the Revolutionary War was within the Township of West Windsor at that time. In 1797, West Windsor Township became incorporated and then included only a portion of Princeton Township and Princeton Borough.

Mercer County was established in 1838 and in 1853, the current borders of West Windsor Township were established and contained 26.84 square miles. Today, West Windsor's community character reflects the gradual evolution of several historic farming villages and transportation crossroads that grew together over time into the current township's character. The historic hamlets identified within the 1853 boundaries included:

- Clarksville – at the intersection of US Route 1 and Quakerbridge Road
- Dutch Neck – at the intersection of Village and South Mill roads
- Edinburg – at the intersection of Old Trenton and Edinburg roads
- Grovers Mill – at the intersection of Cranbury and Clarksville roads
- Penns Neck – on both sides of Washington Road, east of US Route 1
- Port Windsor/Mercer – at the end of Quakerbridge Road at the Delaware Canal
- Scudders Mills/Aqueduct - at the confluence of the Millstone River and Carnegie Lake
- Princeton Basin - where Alexander Road crosses the Delaware and Raritan Canal

A seventh hamlet, Princeton Junction, was established in 1865 when the train station was built in West Windsor.

During the colonial period up to the early twentieth-century, the mature forests that likely dominated the landscape were clear-cut to maximize agricultural use. Since the 1960s, the direct transportation corridor between New York City and Philadelphia has made West Windsor a prime location for suburban development. In recent decades, the majority of the township lands have been developed into suburban residential and commercial uses, yet progressive planning has assured that approximately one-half of the total land area has been set aside as open space and permanently preserved for parks, preserves, or farmland. Today, West Windsor is home to 32,839 residents, based upon the U.S. Census Bureau estimate of July, 2025, who represent a wide variety of cultural, ethnic, educational, professional, and economic backgrounds, West Windsor is also home to a strong business sector, successful educational institutions, and active religious congregations and civic groups.

Geologically, the land of West Windsor Township is relatively flat, with elevations ranging between 60 and 100 feet above sea level, mostly laying within the Coastal Plain. The lands north and west of the northeast corridor rail line within the Piedmont lowlands geomorphic region. The Coastal Plain region is characterized by gently southeastwardly dipping clays, marls, silts and sands with interglacial gravel caps on hills and watersheds divides. The Piedmont region is characterized by topography that gently undulates and slopes from the Highlands to the Coastal Plain.

Rocks in this region consist of soft red shales, with areas of sandstone, siltstone, resistant argillites and volcanic rocks. Surficial Pleistocene formations are the most recent; they overly all the other formations and consists of a thin sand-gravel-rocky veneer that was deposited as stream gradients changed during an Ice Age period. In the Pleistocene formation, a large percentage of unconsolidated materials are present and generally range from less than three feet to over ten feet in thickness. In the early days, when agricultural activities in the township predominated, rocks were moved and formed the boundaries of farm fields and were a testament to the amount of large, unconsolidated material found on the surface. None of the glaciation events within New Jersey moved south enough to cover this area of Mercer County but the area was affected by glacial outwash.

The division between New Jersey Watershed Management Areas 10 and 11 occurs within West Windsor Township. Surface water within the Stonybrook Millstone WMA 10 flow north into the Raritan River, while surface waters in the Assunpink WMA 11 flow south into the Delaware River. The Delaware and Raritan Canal traverse the northwestern edge of the township along its border with Princeton Township.

There are eight rivers in the township, namely Millstone River, Duck Pond Run, Assunpink Creek, Bridegroom Run, Canoe Brook, Big Bear Brook, Little Bear Brook and the Delaware and Raritan Canal. There are also two lakes; Mercer Lake, within the Mercer County Park and Grovers Mill Pond. Some of these waterbodies have substantial riparian zones, floodplain, and/or wetlands.

West Windsor Township has preserved major portions of the environmentally sensitive areas under the Township Greenbelt Plan, and thus wide, natural belts of woodlands occur along the banks of these waterbodies. The Greenbelt Plan also includes substantial areas of uplands making connections between the lowland stream corridors. It was intended that the belts measure at least 400 feet in width in order to enable sustainable regeneration of the natural flora and fauna of the township and in many areas this dimension has been exceeded, but some pinch points do exist.

Suburban development has included substantial areas of land set aside for surface stormwater management, including retention and detention basins along with swales and infiltration areas. Since the 1980s, the township land use codes have required that these elements be vegetated with riparian forest and herbaceous landscape plants. Recent NJDEP requirements have shifted landscape plantings in these features toward herbaceous plantings to facilitate infiltration and pollution reduction. West Windsor Township still requires the planting of trees in association with stormwater management areas, but this may occur more on the perimeter of these areas.

The township's Greenbelt closely aligns with the goals of the NJDEP's Connecting Habitat Across New Jersey (CHANJ) initiative, which seeks to make the landscape more permeable for land-based wildlife by protecting important habitat areas, restoring movement corridors, and improving road crossings. CHANJ is referenced here as supporting information; this CFMP remains focused on West Windsor's actual Greenbelt, preserved lands, trees, and woodlands.

West Windsor's lowland forests are dominated by *Acer rubrum*, red maple and *Liquidambar styraciflua*, sweetgum tree species. Upland forests are dominated by *Quercus*, red, white, willow, and pin oak and *Fagus grandifolia*, beech trees.

West Windsor is situated within the 2023 U.S. Department. of Agriculture, Plant Hardiness Zone of 7a (characterized by annual extreme minimum temperatures between 1991 and 2020 of zero- and five-degrees F.). Historically, temperatures within West Windsor can range from -7 to +105 degrees F., with a winter average near 32 degrees F and summer average near 72 degrees F. Since major portions of West Windsor Township are now developed, the planted community forest consists of a diverse mix of native and non-native plant species. A more detailed description of the township's planted or suburban community forest can be found in a subsection of this document below.

Community Forestry Program: Since 1976, when the township first established its STC, the Community Forestry Program in West Windsor Township has been active. The following is an overview of the elements and actions of the program:

- Community Forestry Management Plan: The West Windsor STC developed and adopted the first West Windsor Township CFMP Plan in 2000. The fourth five-year management plan was adopted in 2016. This CFMP represents the fifth edition.
- Street Trees: Over the past five decades, several simple inventories of street trees and public lands trees were collated by community foresters. As detailed below and in 2026the township completed a more comprehensive inventory of all township street trees. Note: The trees along the major thoroughfares through the township (state highways and county routes) as well as privately-owned local streets were not included in these inventories, since those trees are not along streets owned by the township.

In general, Township streets constructed since 1980 have been designed to accommodate four or more feet- wide tree lawn and have been planted with trees lining both sides of the street. This is because of the 1976 adoption of a Street Tree Master Plan by the STC as well as the implementation of landscape ordinance updates in the mid-1980s. Streets developed prior to this time often have more narrow tree lawns (three feet or less) and thus are not conducive to the planting of street trees between the curb and sidewalk. Thus, street tree plantings associated with these older neighborhoods occurred behind the sidewalk and on private property.

Since the early 1980s, a significant portion of the township was developed from farmland to suburban housing and supportive uses such as retail, offices, warehouse, and cultural facilities. With this development a vast majority of township streets installed at this time were lined with trees with a spacing between 30 and 60 feet. Initially, the street trees planted were large canopy type trees (e.g. oak, maple, etc.) with some lower stature flowering cherry species. Trees were planted in groupings of 25 to 50 trees of the same species, to create a uniform canopy over the street and walk, while attempting to avoid excessive monocultural plantings within a given neighborhood.

This type of planting continued through until 2015, when the STC developed and adopted a modified scheme for street tree planting. The scheme was modified for several reasons. First, it was noted that as some of the original, now middle-aged, canopy trees fail, planting a new tree of the same species will never achieve the uniformity envisioned, as originally implemented. Second, it was determined that the street tree inventory should include a greater diversity of species. Third, it was decided that it would be more prudent to plant understory trees to both achieve the first two objectives previously noted and also to reduce the potential that the roots of new street trees would result in uplifted sidewalks.

It was believed that this scheme would more closely imitate natural forests with trees growing to canopy and understory heights. A list of understory tree species and cultivars that were available in a tree form (single trunk with a canopy above eye level) was developed for guidance.

This new scheme was implemented with the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Management Plan and ten years of tree removals and planting (~2,000 trees) that followed. In 2015, the township received a \$100,000 grant from NJDEP, which supported funding the initial three years of replanting street trees lost to EAB.

- Open Space Tree Inventory: General, inventories of township open space trees and woodlands were developed by the STC between 2008 and 2015 and in concert with Individual Property Management Plan for each property or type of property.

To compliment these inventories, the STC developed a Tree Canopy Estimate Goal for the community. This goal included an estimate of the current canopy cover (37% in 2010) and established a goal of 40% canopy cover. It also established a timeline and projected means to expand the canopy cover of the township.

The need and methods of augmenting more comprehensive inventories of open space trees, relative to CFMP guidelines, will be analyzed during the period of this current plan, including implementation recommendations.

- Removal of hazardous conditions: This task is a continuous action that occurs based upon reporting to and observation by STC members and township staff. Most of the work to address these conditions is conducted by the township public works staff, but more complex work is contracted to private arborists.
- Repair of uneven or broken sidewalks due to tree roots: For the past twenty-five years, the township's Engineering Division has administered a sidewalk repair program with either annual or bi-annual executed contracts to private contractors to implement sidewalk repairs. Tree-preservation sensitive methods of sidewalk re-construction (ramping over roots and installation of root barriers for new plantings) have been implemented under this program.
- Arbor Day celebration and Tree City USA: Since 1977, West Windsor Township has continuously been awarded the Tree City USA designation and the community has celebrated Arbor Day. For the past twenty-five years, the Arbor Day celebration has typically included a school district art or poetry contest, sponsored and conducted by the STC, along with tree planting, tree sapling distribution; and various cultural and educational exhibitions. The celebration is typically conducted at the Ronald R. Rogers Arboretum, but due to inclement weather it has been moved to an indoor location as necessary.
- Dissemination of arboricultural standards: The STC and staff regularly conduct research into arboricultural issues and standards that may be relevant to trees in our township. This includes a review of publications from state, national and international governments and organizations, trade groups, extension services, professional associations and research groups.

The STC develops and posts policies, guidelines and public notices regarding the topics and standards. Topics have included:

- Bamboo Control and Regulation
- Updated Tree Removal Ordinance
- Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan
- Emerald Ash Borer Advisory
- Emerald Ash Borer Adoption Program – AAA WW Trees
- Bacterial Leaf Scorch Advisory
- Storm Damage Advisory
- Tree Canopy Clearance Pruning
- Japanese Beetle Infestation
- Gypsy Moth Investigation and Infestation
- Tree Food – what is fertilizer?
- Street Tree Planting and Sidewalk Conflicts
- Utility R.O.W. (right-of-way) Vegetation Management

These notices and guidelines have been posted on the township web page (westwindsortwp.gov – as of September 2026) and in kiosks at the arboretum or township parks. They were also distributed to Township staff responsible for receiving inquiries from residents so as to facilitate a consistent and beneficial transmission of information and policies on these subjects to the public.

STC has also worked with several Scouting America (formerly known as, Boy Scouts) and Girl Scouts to conduct tree care information sessions developing handouts on topics such as mulching, planting and pruning.

- Township Master Plan, ordinances, land use policies and procedures: A periodic review of documents that regulate proposed land development or re-development applications with respect to landscape and community forestry requirements, is conducted by the STC and township staff. The STC has offered suggestions into the Planning Board's re-examination of the Township Master Plan. The Township Tree Removal Ordinance was revised in 2024, and a Bamboo Control Ordinance was adopted in August, 2026.
- Ronald R. Rogers Arboretum: The development of the Ronald R. Rogers Arboretum, established in 1999, has been a continuous project for the STC and township staff. New and replacement trees and shrubs are planted annually. The focus of the arboretum is display and education regarding *Quercus*, oak tree genus. STC has coordinated with several scouts to implement service projects at the arboretum including: planting; historic trees; picnic tables; bat houses; and poison ivy interpretive exhibits. The arboretum continues to grow as a focal point for community gathering, recreation, as well as celebrating trees.

A Memorial Tree Program is offered at the Ron R. Rogers Arboretum. Donations are accepted through non-profit partners to plant trees, frequently with engraved pavers memorializing individuals and events associated with the community. Some such trees include the Township's Liberty Tree and a tree planted in 2026 in honor of Brigadier General Hugh Mercer, a hero of the Battle of Princeton.

- Conduct routine community forestry management schedule – On a daily basis, the township Landscape Architect receives, answers, or directs resident requests concerning the tree resource.

The township Landscape Architect conducts an annual pruning training session with the Public Works staff to introduce new staff to proper techniques and update the crew on the latest developments.

The Department of Public Works has developed a consistent program for the pruning of street trees along Township roads. The majority of this work is canopy raising or clearance pruning.

The street tree replacement program has been very successful with the annual replanting approximately 50 to 100 trees.

More recently, a single digital resident request list that is shared between the Public Works and the Engineering Division has been implemented to enable more efficient and consistent sharing of information regarding requests and actions taken.

- Community Projects - The township has partnered with the Lions Club, Rotary Club, high school clubs, a local retirement community art club, a local outdoors retailer, and numerous Girl Scout and Eagle Scout service projects.
- Apply for and maintain Tree City USA status 1977 and for nearly a half century, the STC has successfully applied for Tree City USA. The township continues to support the basic standards necessary to achieve and maintain this status. This program is a great source of pride for the community and aids all other efforts to promote conservation in the community.
- Maintain CEU's (Continuing Education Units) and approved status under the Community Forestry Act – The township Landscape Architect and most members of the STC have attended various education programs to maintain CEUs under the New Jersey Community Forestry Act. The training and education sessions attended have helped inform and guide the management program within the township. Approved status has been maintained over the past five years. The liability protection associated with this Act is the most beneficial element that helps support continued participation and funding for work to retain approved status.

b. Maps

- Township Boundary Map – TO BE INSERTED
- Township Open Space Map – TO BE INSERTED
- Township Canopy Cover Map – TO BE INSERTED
- Township Greenbelt Map – TO BE INSERTED
- Township Land Use or Zoning Map - TO BE INSERTED
- Environmental Justice Law, Overburdened Community Map – TO BE INSERTED.

Note: Street Names are labeled on several of these maps.

MAPS ARE EXCLUDED FROM THIS VERSION TO REDUCE SIZE

AN AUXILIARY DOCUMENT INCLUDES THE MAPS AT THIS TIME

c. Forestry Barriers to Success and Trends

The township's community forestry program has achieved significant accomplishments over five decades, as summarized above and in Appendix D. At the same time, several recurring challenges affect the township's ability to fully achieve its community forestry goals.

- Diseases and Insect Infestations. The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation, which resulted in the removal and replacement of approximately 2,000 street ash trees and approximately 200 park ash trees over a ten-year period, was the most significant insect-related challenge faced by the township's community forest in recent decades. The EAB experience demonstrated the vulnerability of a community forest resource to an overreliance on a small number of varied tree species.
- Budget and Resource Constraints. The township's community forestry budget supports forestry management actions including; tree maintenance, planting, and removals, as well as education and training of STC volunteers and township paid staff. However, rising costs constantly present constraints on the continuation of these actions and limitation of the expansion of existing or proposed actions. Grants have and can help offset some of these constraints and limitations, but not those related to staffing or significant inflationary costs. The costs associated with recent projects and the need for expanded maintenance tasks will likely present the need to expand budget allocations in the near and far terms.
- Information Management. The recently completed 2026 Street Tree Inventory (attached below) offered the first full evaluation of the street tree resource and presented several recommendations to maintain and sustain this resource. Implementation of continued and new maintenance tasks based upon the findings, along with a continual update of the inventory data may present a challenge moving forward. Expanding collected inventory information to include open space and civic facility spaces also presents a significant challenge.
- Public Education and Awareness. While the township's Arbor Day programs, arboretum kiosk, and web-based advisories have built a strong base of public engagement, continued effort is needed to extend this awareness to reach a broader number of residents in all neighborhoods. Addressing the challenges that public education and awareness present an important action to foster support, assistance, and actions to sustain the health and safety of the community forest and the welfare of the community.

4. Forest Structure, Composition and Trends (Inventory & Resource Analysis)**a. Street Trees – Trees Lining Township Roads**

Street Tree Inventory: In preparation for the development of this CFMP, the township determined that it would be beneficial to conduct a more complete street tree inventory through the winter of 2025. The township contracted with Daniel Dobromilsky, Licensed Tree Expert. The first step was an analysis of existing inventory data, current processes or methods of managing the tree resource, as well as the capability and availability of township staff to implement management tasks. The various data points recommended under the NJ DEP Community Forestry Guidelines were also analyzed as they relate specifically to West Windsor Township's capabilities and needs.

It was decided that the township would be best served by an inventory, recorded on MSExcel[®] spreadsheets, with data collected for trees lining each public township street, inclusive of median and cul-de-sac islands. The data to be collected for each street would include:

- Tree species present on each street
- Quantity of each species by tree size (<12" dbh; 12"-25" dbh; > 25")
- Tree identification number (for potential integration with i-tree resources)
- Presence of sidewalk and width of the tree lawn
- Presence of overhead wires
- Trees of concern (dead; declining; damaged; blocking street lights)
- Number of open planting sites (trees missing)
- Number of trees removal required
- Number of trees canopy raise pruning required
- Number of trees street light clearance pruning required
- Number of trees on an island, width of island

A review of potential data collection methods revealed the potential to utilize Google Street View[®] images to scan township streets and to collect the above listed data. This method would allow for the completion of a complete inventory in three months, which could be utilized to inform this fifth edition of the CFMP, as strongly recommended by NJDEP Community Forestry follow-up guidance (FAQ and Model Plans) distributed in the fall of 2025.

The 2026 Inventory of West Windsor Township Street Trees was completed by May 1, 2026 and the data, analysis, and recommendations offered with the inventory report have been incorporated into this 2026-2030 CFMP. The West Windsor Township street tree resource was observed to have the following characteristics:

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>Finding</u>
<u>Genera & Species:</u>	
• Total number of trees:	13,707
• Total Genera (e.g. <i>Acer</i>):	58
(21 with more than 100 trees; 37 with fewer than 100)	
• Genera that exceed 20% of total:	2
(Acer – 32% & Quercus – 23%)	

- Tree Species (e.g. *Rubrum*): **78**
(25 with more than 100 trees; 53 with fewer than 100)
Note: Some genera (e.g. *Prunus*) were not separated by species
- Tree Species that exceed 10% of total: **1**
(*Acer rubrum* – 20%)

Range of tree sizes:

- Trees less than 12" dbh: **10,409 (~76%)**
- Trees between 12" and 25" dbh: **3,119 (~22%)**
- Trees greater than 25" dbh: **179 (~ 1%)**

Tree Condition:

- Trees of Concern (Removal Needed): **107**
- Trees Exhibiting Decline (May need future attention): **568**
- Ash (*Fraxinus*) Genus Trees (Susceptible to EAB). **157**
- Trees that impede Lights: **132**
- Trees with low Canopy < 14' Height: **7,147**
- Exotic, Highly Invasive Species Trees: **966**
- Trees in Median or cul-de-sac Islands: **626**
- Approximate number Open Planting Sites (new) **222**

Based upon the findings of these observations, several characteristics are worthy of discussion to help inform resource management planning and actions. Note: it is a generally accepted guideline that no single species should exceed 10% of the tree population and no single genus should exceed 20%, to limit exposure to pandemic infestations of disease or insects, which could lead to a significant and rapid loss of trees. The following is an analysis of the findings related to management and planning actions:

- *Acer* (maple) genus makes up 32% of the inventoried tree population, significantly exceeding the guidance to have no one genera exceed 20% of the total.
- *Quercus* (oak) genus makes up 23% of the inventoried tree population, minimally exceeding the 20% genera guidance.
- *Acer rubrum* (red maple) species makes up 19% of the tree population, significantly exceeding the guidance to have no one species exceed 10% of the total.
- *Acer saccharum* (sugar maple) and *Quercus rubra* (red oak) species make up 9% of the tree population, just below the 10% species guidance.
- Highly invasive, exotic species make up 7% of the tree population with most of these trees being *Pyrus calleryana* (Callery Pear) at 618 trees.
- Open planting sites (missing) represent only 1.5% of the "tree" population.
- Trees in need of removal (dead) make up less than 1% of the tree population, but if *Fraxinus* (ash) totals are added to this quantity the make-up would bump up to 2%.
- Tree blocking lights makes up less than 1% of the tree population.
- Trees that will require canopy clearance pruning (presently or in the future) makes up 52% of the tree population.
- Smaller or younger trees make up 76% of the tree population.

- The EAB management plan and actions that resulted in the replacement of approximately 2,000 ash street trees with mostly smaller understory tree species greatly improved the diversity of the West Windsor Township street tree resource. As these trees mature analysis should be conducted to determine the species that seem to perform best and those that do not fare well as street trees to refine the selection process for future replacement street trees.
- As cul-de-sac and median island trees fail the potential to introduce additional variety of tree species should be considered.

Street Tree Lawn: The vast majority of the Township local streets are lined by 4-foot-wide sidewalks off-set four feet from the street curb creating a four-foot-wide tree lawn. Some streets with narrowed cartways (24-28 feet have been developed with a slightly larger tree lawn width. In fact, current ordinances suggest that a width of six feet width for the tree lawn is preferred, again to reduce the likelihood of sidewalk uplift. Current practices in the township also include the introduction of root barriers (18-inch depth x 6 feet length) flanking the sidewalk where street trees are planted. However, these modifications are limited to a much smaller portion of the township that has been developed over the last five to ten years.

Overhead Wires: The vast majority of township streets were constructed since 1976 and electric lines along these streets were placed underground along the outer edges of the right of way. In some locations these lines occur under the sidewalk and tree lawn, but conflicts are not a significant issue.

There are a few neighborhoods, developed before 1980, that have overhead electric and communication lines, and some of these streets have been planted with street trees. The tall and wide canopy trees that were planted along these streets have been replaced with understory tree species with the intention that they will avoid conflict with electric lines. However, significant portions of these streets are not planted with any street trees to avoid such conflicts and in response to resident or utility concerns.

Planting Sites: Since the township has comprehensive landscape ordinances and consistent implementation, nearly all township streets, with sufficiently sized planting sites for street trees, are presently tree lined. Areas void of street tree planting are either recently vacant due to the failure of a tree(s), or due to conditions (narrow tree lawn, overhead wires, sight distance constraints, etc.) that preclude such planting. The Township has historically replanted street trees annually to replace trees that fail. An annual budget and contracts have been implemented for over twenty years to minimize viable street tree planting site vacancy.

b. Parks and Civic Facilities:

West Windsor Township does not have comprehensive inventory data regarding open space woodland, and landscaped civic facilities (offices, service yards, etc.). However, West Windsor does have a consistent tradition of including landscape plantings with shade, evergreen, and seasonal interest trees with new and renovation park and facility projects.

The tree resource for the two larger township parks (Community and Duck Pond), are described below to provide a preliminary examination of this part of the forest resource. The landscape of the municipal complex, and preserved Greenbelt lands are described, for this same purpose. As noted throughout this CFMP, the scope, timing, and implementation of more detailed tree resource inventory data for these properties will be a near future objective, subject to resource and funding availability

- Community Park was developed initially in the 1990s and thus the trees planted throughout portions of the park developed for active recreation are now in their third decade of growth. The main drive is lined with *Quercus phellos*, willow oak. The pool/skatepark/dogpark parking lot is planted with *Platanus x acerfolia*, planetrees. *Tilia tomentum*, Silver Linden trees shade the soccer/cricket pitch parking lot. A later addition, the Babe Ruth baseball field is shaded by *Gleditsia triacanthos*, honeylocust.

Along the perimeter of the park, tree buffers for the adjacent residential homes include: *Pinus strobus*, white pine; *Picea abies*, Norway Spruce; *Picea pungens*, Colorado Spruce and some *Psuedotsuga*, Douglas Fir that have not yet succumb to needlecast. More recent coniferous additions include: *Juniperus virginiana*, red cedar and *Thuja plicata*, green giant arborvitae. Flowering trees include: *Amelachier*, shadblow; *Cercis*, redbud; and *Koeleruteria*, rain tree. In open areas the park is shaded by: *Platanus*, planetree; *Quercus acutissima*, sawtooth oak; *Quercus rubra*, red oak; *Acer rubrum*, red maple; *Acer saccharum*, sugar maple, as well as some *Fagus*, beech trees.

Along the outer perimeter of Community Park preserved woodlands remain from the properties transition from farmland to park use. A portion of the land behind the present dog and skate parks was an evergreen farm for Christmas trees. A significant portion of these trees were transplanted throughout the park and to other township properties while the trees were still of a size that would allow transplanting. Some of these trees still remain along with pioneer trees including: *Prunus serotina*, black cherry; *Rhus species*, sumac; and *Pyrus calleryana*, pear. A mix of native species are found in the surrounding woodland including various species of oak, sweetgum, black gum, red maple, beech, and red cedar. The predominant species are oak, maple, and gum. The trees are estimated to be 50 to 60 years in age with a height of 60 to 100 feet.

- Duck Pond Park was initially developed in 2000s with a few additions including an extensive landscape planting about two years after the initial development of recreation courts and fields. Landscape tree plantings include: *Acer*, maple; *Quercus*, oak; *Juniperus*, red cedar; *Amelachier*, shadblow; and *Crataegus*, hawthorn.

Along the outer perimeter of Duck Pond Park remain preserved woodlands from the property's transition from farmland to park use. These lands are largely lowland riparian and wetland zones along the edges of the Duck Pond Run and wetlands associated with the Duck Pond/Bear Brook wetlands. The predominate tree species include: red maple, sweetgum, and pin oak. Similar to Community Park, the trees are estimated to be 50 to 60 years in age with a height of 60 to 100 feet.

Between the mature woodland and the rear soccer fields some areas that were subject of an inappropriate diversion of the Duck Pond Run prior to the township acquisition of the land were previously mown annually. These areas have now have been allowed to reforest with assistance from sapling plantings consisting of native species of oak, maple, and gum. Area Girl Scouts have been instrumental in spearheading this planting initiative.

- Neighborhood Parks: The Township does not currently have an inventory of the tree resource associated with the Ronald R. Rogers Arboretum, Chamberlin Park, Van Nest Park, Conover Road Fields, and Zaitz Park.
- Township Civic Facilities: West Windsor does not have an inventory of the tree resource related to Township civic facilities, which would include offices and service facilities.

Municipal Campus: At the corner of Clarksville and North Post roads, the township municipal complex includes the municipal offices, police station and court, senior center, library (county branch), and US post office. The central parking lot is planted with *Fraxinus americana*, white ash trees that are under treatment for Emerald Ash Borer, which may ultimately succumb to infestation. Other trees within the parking lot include: *Quercus phellos*, willow oak, and *Quercus alba*, white oak. Understory trees around the municipal campus include: *Chionanthus*, fringe tree; Crapemyrtle; *Acer palmatum*, Japanese Maple; *Cornus*, dogwood; *Malus*, crabapple; *Amelanchier*, shadblow; and *Syringa reticulata*, tree lilac. Coniferous trees include: *Pinus strobus*, white pine, *Picea pungens*; Colorado Spruce; and *Thuja plicata*, green giant arborvitae. The age and thus size of these trees vary due to the staggered time of planting from 1976 to present. The most significant issue facing the landscape at this site is Emerald Ash Borer and the potential for any oak affliction infesting the willow oak

c. Preserve Forests / Greenbelt and Stormwater Basins:

West Windsor Township does not have an inventory regarding preserve forests including the Greenbelt, and Re-forested Stormwater Management Areas.

A more general, inventory of township open space trees and woodlands was also developed by the STC between 2008 and 2015, in concert with Individual Property Management Plan (IPP) for each property or type of property.

To compliment these inventories, the STC developed a Tree Canopy Estimate Goal for the community. This goal included an estimate of the current canopy cover (37% in 2010) and established a goal of 40% canopy cover, as well as a timeline and projected means to expand the canopy cover of the township.

Native species that predominate these outer coastal plain forests include: *Acer rubrum*, red maple; *Cornus*, dogwood; *Fagus*, beech; *Liquidambar styraciflua*, sweetgum; *Nyssa sylvatica*, blackgum; *Pinus*, white pine; *Platanus*, sycamore; *Quercus*, upland and lowland oak. In some locations, which were subject to natural succession from abandoned farm field to woodland, *Pyrus calleryana*, Callery Pear, an exotic invasive tree species has heavily infiltrated the native tree population. The long-term succession of these areas should be monitored to determine if future action to reduce the population of Callery Pear or other invasive species is pragmatic.

Future open space tree inventories that describe the predominate tree species observed in particular areas of these lands should considered to help inform future initiatives to sustain this element of the community forest resource.

5. Goals – Overall Community Forestry Goals

- **Sustain and Protect**: Maintain and protect the community forest resource on public properties in a sustainable, productive and safe condition
- **Grow and Expand**: Expand the community forest resource to further enhance the visual and environmental quality of the township streets, neighborhoods, parks, civic spaces and schools, maintaining a pragmatically equitable distribution of the community forest resource within all neighborhoods
- **Educate and Engage**: Educate and engage the community and community leaders on the value, need and proper methods to maintain and expand a desirable community forest resource.

6. Plan Connections and Other Considerations

This CFMP does not stand alone; it is intended to be coordinated with, and inform, other t plans, ordinances, and programs that affect the community forest resource, as well as township emergency management functions.

a. Township Master Plan

The STC has coordinated with Planning Board requests regarding periodic review of the Township Master Plan. The township completed a comprehensive re-examination of the Master Plan between 2018 and 2022, during which the CFMP was reviewed and helped inform the goals, objectives, and discussion presented in both the Open Space and Recreation Plan Element and the Conservation Plan Element. The CFMP is typically attached to the Township Master Plan as an addendum, thus making it more accessible to the public.

b. Conservation Plan Element

The Conservation Plan Element of the Township Master Plan establishes West Windsor Township's long-term strategy to conserve, protect, restore, and enhance its natural resources through stewardship, sound management practices, and coordinated municipal and community action. It recognizes that conservation involves not only protecting existing resources, including trees and wooded areas, but also maintaining the health, resilience, ecological functions, and public benefits of these resources over time.

West Windsor Township has demonstrated a multi-decades-long commitment to conservation through preservation of environmentally sensitive lands, implementation of its Greenbelt Plan, adoption of comprehensive landscape and tree protection ordinances, and continued investment in parks, preserves, and public open space. As a result, a substantial portion of the Township's community forest resource already benefits from permanent protection.

The principal conservation challenge facing West Windsor has therefore evolved. While continued preservation opportunities should be pursued where appropriate, the township's primary emphasis during the term of this CFMP should be stewardship of the extensive community forest resource that has already been established. Long-term conservation depends upon sustained maintenance, monitoring, invasive species management, replacement planting, protection of mature trees, and continued investment in forest health.

Conservation of the forest resources should be integrated into municipal planning, capital improvements, park management, roadway projects, stormwater management, and land development review. Whenever practical, existing healthy trees and woodland resources should be preserved during public improvements and private development, consistent with public safety, engineering requirements, and applicable township ordinances.

The STC should continue to advise the township regarding policies and priorities that support conservation of the community forest resource. Implementation should continue to be carried out primarily through the Department of Community Development, Department of Public Works, as well as other appropriate municipal departments, community organizations, volunteers, and private property owners where applicable.

West Windsor recognizes that conservation extends beyond municipally-owned lands. Trees located on commercial properties, homeowners' association lands, institutional campuses, and other privately-owned properties contribute significantly to the township's overall canopy cover, environmental quality, scenic character, wildlife habitat, stormwater management, carbon sequestration, and quality of life. The township will continue to encourage sound tree stewardship on these properties through education, ordinance administration, technical guidance, and cooperation with property owners.

The township's established dedicated Open Space Trust funding mechanism provides an important opportunity to support long-term stewardship activities where authorized by law. Continued financial investment, combined with volunteer participation and public education, will help ensure that West Windsor's community forest resource remains healthy, resilient, and sustainable for future generations.

Accordingly, the conservation objective of this CFMP is not simply to preserve additional acreage, but to ensure that the trees, woodlands, and associated natural resources already entrusted to the Township continue to provide environmental, economic, aesthetic, historical, and community benefits for residents and visitors alike.

c. Open Space and Recreation Plan Element

The Open Space and Recreation Plan Element of the Township Master Plan establishes West Windsor Township's strategy for preserving, protecting, and managing preserved open space lands. West Windsor Township has long been recognized as a leader in open space preservation.

Through the vision of successive governing bodies, the Greenbelt Plan, voter support for dedicated open space funding, and the efforts of numerous municipal officials, volunteers, and community organizations, the township has permanently preserved thousands of acres of environmentally sensitive lands, parks, natural areas, stream corridors, farmland, and woodlands. These preserved lands now comprise a substantial portion of West Windsor's community forest resource. It recognizes that permanently preserved land is not an end in itself, but the foundation for long-term continued public benefit through stewardship.

Because of these decades of successful acquisition efforts, the township's principal focus has appropriately shifted from preserving additional acreage whenever opportunities arise to ensuring responsible stewardship of the lands already entrusted to public ownership. The Open Space and Recreation Plan Element and the CFMP should therefore emphasize long-term management of existing resources through continued investment in monitoring forest health, hazard tree mitigation, storm readiness, protection of ecological functions and where appropriate, invasive species control, habitat enhancement, and replacement or new planting.

The township's dedicated Open Space Trust funding mechanism provides an important and sustainable means of supporting eligible stewardship activities. Continued use of this funding source, together with municipal appropriations, grants, volunteer participation, and community partnerships, will help protect the substantial public investment already made in West Windsor's preserved lands.

Open space planning under this CFMP also recognizes the importance of preserving ecological connectivity. The Township's Greenbelt Plan, stream corridors, wooded parks, preserved farms, and natural areas collectively provide wildlife habitat, improve water quality, reduce stormwater runoff, moderate urban heat, enhance air quality, increase carbon sequestration, and contribute significantly to the community's scenic character and quality of life.

Accordingly, the objective of this Open Space Plan Element is to ensure that West Windsor's extensive network of preserved open space continues to function as a healthy, resilient, and well-managed community forest resource. Future success will depend not only upon protecting additional lands where appropriate, but upon sustained stewardship, sound management, adequate funding, and continued community involvement in caring for the remarkable open space legacy that previous generations have created.

d. Greenbelt Plan

West Windsor Township's Greenbelt Plan is one of the community's defining planning initiatives and has guided open space preservation and natural resource protection for decades. Originally conceived through the efforts of the Environmental Commission, in the 1970s, it was subsequently incorporated into the township's planning documents. West Windsor Township has preserved major portions of its environmentally sensitive areas through the Township Greenbelt Plan.

The Greenbelt Plan established a long-term vision for preserving an interconnected network of natural lands, focused upon stream corridors, but inclusive of woodlands, wetlands, and other environmentally significant areas throughout the township. The Greenbelt also includes substantial upland areas that provide connections between lowland stream corridors.

The Greenbelt was intended to provide buffers of at least 400 feet in width to support sustainable regeneration of native flora and fauna, but in many locations the lands extend much wider. These interconnected lands provide important ecological functions, including wildlife habitat, biodiversity, groundwater recharge, flood mitigation, stormwater management, water quality protection, carbon sequestration, climate resilience, and the creation of an equitable distribution of woodland canopy throughout the community. The Greenbelt also contributes significantly to West Windsor's scenic beauty and rural-suburban character while providing recreational opportunities through trails, passive recreation areas, and nature observation.

The township's Greenbelt closely aligns with the goals of the NJDEP Connecting Habitat Across New Jersey (CHANJ) initiative, which seeks to make the landscape more permeable for land-based wildlife by protecting important habitat areas, restoring movement corridors, and improving road crossings. CHANJ is referenced here as supporting information; West Windsor's community forestry program remains focused on locally preserved lands, trees and woodlands.

The emphasis during this fifth edition of the township's CFMP effective date is therefore not only to preserve additional lands where opportunities arise, but also to ensure that the township's existing Greenbelt remains healthy, resilient, and capable of providing environmental, recreational, scenic, and community benefits for future generations.

e. Stormwater Management Facilities and Community Forestry

As described above, the township land use codes have required stormwater management areas to be vegetated with riparian forest and herbaceous landscape plantings since the 1980s, consistent with both township ordinances and some of the more recent NJDEP stormwater infrastructure regulations.

West Windsor Township recognizes that properly designed and maintained stormwater management facilities can provide significant community forestry and environmental benefits in addition to their primary functions of flood control, groundwater recharge, stormwater quantity and quality management, and pollutant reduction. Trees and other woody vegetation, when appropriately selected and located, can improve the ecological value, appearance, and long-term performance of many green infrastructure stormwater management practices.

The township's Stormwater Control Ordinance (Chapter 200, Article XXI) requires that major development incorporate green infrastructure best management practices and low impact development strategies to maintain natural hydrology, encourage infiltration, improve water quality, and reduce stormwater runoff.

The ordinance further requires that stormwater management facilities be designed using environmentally sound engineering and landscape architectural techniques while considering existing environmental resources and minimizing long-term maintenance requirements.

Accordingly, where consistent with sound engineering practice, public safety, maintenance requirements, and applicable NJDEP stormwater design standards, the township will encourage the incorporation of appropriate native trees and woody vegetation within and adjacent to municipal stormwater management facilities. Tree and species selection shall consider mature size, root characteristics, hydraulic function, maintenance access, visibility, dam and embankment integrity, underground utilities, and long-term facility performance. Trees should not be installed where they would interfere with stormwater conveyance, compromise embankments or outlet structures, impede required inspections or maintenance, create safety hazards, or otherwise conflict with applicable engineering standards.

The Township Department of Community Development, Township Engineer, Township Landscape Architect, may seek input and guidance from the STC when reviewing municipal stormwater projects to identify opportunities for compatible tree planting and long-term vegetation management. Such coordination supports both this CFMP and the Township's Municipal Stormwater Management Program.

f. Community Forestry Program History

A comprehensive community forestry program in West Windsor Township has been active since 1976, when the Township first established a STC, consistent with New Jersey public law. The following summarizes the principal elements and activities of the program to date:

- Community Forestry Management Plans. The STC developed and adopted its first CFMP in 2000. The fourth five-year plan was adopted in 2016, and this CFMP represents the fifth edition.
- Tree Inventory. Several simple inventories of street trees and public-land trees have been collated by community foresters over the past five decades. A more comprehensive street tree inventory was completed in 2026. Inventories of open space and civic facility properties will be a consideration within the next few years.
- Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Management. In 2014, ash tree (*Fraxinus* spp.) locations were specifically inventoried in anticipation of Emerald Ash Borer management needs. Since that time, the majority of the township's approximately 2,000 ash street trees and approximately 200 ash park trees have been removed and replaced under a management plan developed by the STC and implemented over a ten-year period. Treatment was deployed in an attempt to preserve some of the ash trees, and at the time of the writing of this document, approximately 157 ash are still remaining, with 124 under treatment. The CFMP will address the long-term management of remaining ash trees.

- Open Space and Preserve Tree Inventory. A general, inventory of Township open space trees and woodlands was developed by the STC between 2008 and 2015, in conjunction with Individual Property Management Plans (IPPs) prepared for the purpose of guiding maintenance and enhancement actions on individual open space properties, and the Greenbelt. The inventory information is helpful, but the need to augment this information to better inform future forestry management tasks should be evaluated with this plan.
- Tree Canopy Goal. Complementing these inventories, the STC developed a Tree Canopy Estimate and Goal for the community. The published document including an estimate of existing canopy cover; a goal of 40 percent canopy cover; and a timeline and projected means of expanding canopy cover Township-wide. The Tree Canopy Goal should be revisited and updated in the near future.
- Removal of Hazardous Conditions. This is a continuous activity occurring in response to resident reports; storm, wildfire or other damage; and STC or township staff observation. Most work is performed by township public works staff, with more complex work contracted to private arborists. A review of this activity will be conducted in the near future.
- Sidewalk Repair Program. The Engineering Division has administered a sidewalk repair program for the past 25 years, using annual or biennial contracts. Methods of sidewalk reconstruction that are sensitive to tree preservation have been implemented under this program. The STC monitors the success of this program in preserving existing trees, and should continue to do so into the future, in coordination with the Engineering Division.
- Arbor Day and Tree City USA. West Windsor Township has continuously held the Tree City USA designation since 1977 and has celebrated Arbor Day throughout this period. The STC will continue to administer Township efforts regarding these programs in coordination with the Engineering Division.
- Dissemination of Arboricultural Standards. The STC and township staff regularly review publications from state, national, and international governments and organizations and develop and post policies, guidelines, and public notices on relevant topics. The STC will continue with this activity in coordination with the Department of Public Works, Engineering Division, and Township Administration.
- Master Plan, Ordinances, Land Use Policy and Land Development Review. The STC supports the work by the Department of Community Development, and Land Use Boards, to periodically review documents regulating proposed development and redevelopment applications, as well as applications for land use development with respect to landscape and community forestry requirements. The Township Tree Removal Ordinance was revised in 2024, and a Bamboo Control Ordinance was adopted in 2026.
- Ron R. Rogers Arboretum. Development and management of the Ron R. Rogers Arboretum, established in 1999, has been a continuous STC initiative in coordination with the Recreation and Engineering divisions. Tasks include new and replacement trees and shrubs planted annually. Frequently, the arboretum in the location of the Township's Arbor Day celebration and is the location of the township's 9/11 Memorial.
- Routine Tree Maintenance Program. The Department of Public Works implements an intermittent program for pruning street trees along township roads. This task along with

other street tree maintenance tasks are received and recorded via a digital resident request list spreadsheet in concert with the Landscape Architect. Complex tasks are reviewed as they arise with the Landscape Architect planning any actions. This process has proven to be an efficient means of tracking resident requests and actions taken. The recent completion of a Street Tree Inventory has quantified the scope and pinpointed many locations in need of maintenance actions. Implementation of some specific actions is addressed with this plan.

- CEUs and Approved Status. The Township Landscape Architect and most STC members have completed the NJDEP Community Forestry Core Training and have attended education programs to maintain Continuing Education Units (CEUs) as prescribed under the Community Forestry Act. The township has maintained Approved Status since the inception of this program including the past ten years. Adoption of this CFMP is a required step to maintain this status.
- Previous CFMP's: A brief review of previous CFMP's finds that significant adherence and progress has been made relative to previous goals and objectives. Notably, a street tree inventory has now been completed and annual actions have been continued.

II. Community Forestry Program Capacity

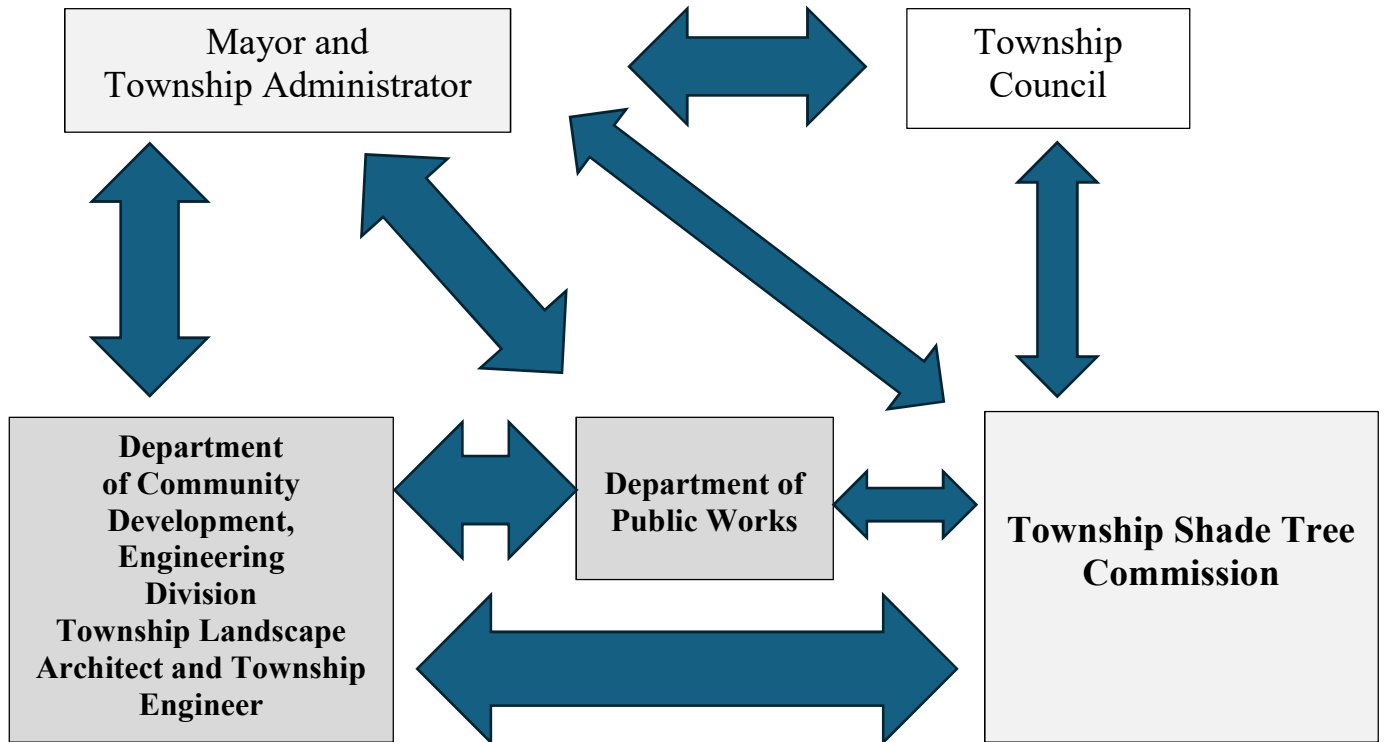
1. Community Forestry Program Administration

The Township Landscape Architect, Engineering Division, is the main staff person implementing community forestry actions on a daily basis. This includes interaction with the Township Mayor and Administrator, Department of Public Works, contracted tree services, and the public. The Township Council appoints a liaison to the Shade Tree Commission as their primary means of direct communication. Township staff communicates with Township Council through the Administrator. A staff liaison to the STC, typically from the Engineering Division, also coordinates Commission meetings, and activities.

The West Windsor Township STC, comprised of five members, is established under § 4-61.1 of the Township Code as the Township's lead advisory body for community forestry matters. That ordinance charges the STC with establishing township policy for the regulation, planting, and care of shade and ornamental trees and shrubbery in all public rights-of-way, parks, and other Township-owned property; directing tree care including pruning, removal of dangerous trees, and treatment of diseased or infested trees; encouraging sound arboricultural practices throughout the township; and recommending plans and programs for incorporation into the Township Master Plan. Chapter 170 of the Township Code (Ordinance No. 2024-08) further designates the STC as the body administering the Prohibited Replacement Tree List governing invasive species restrictions on tree replacement Township-wide.

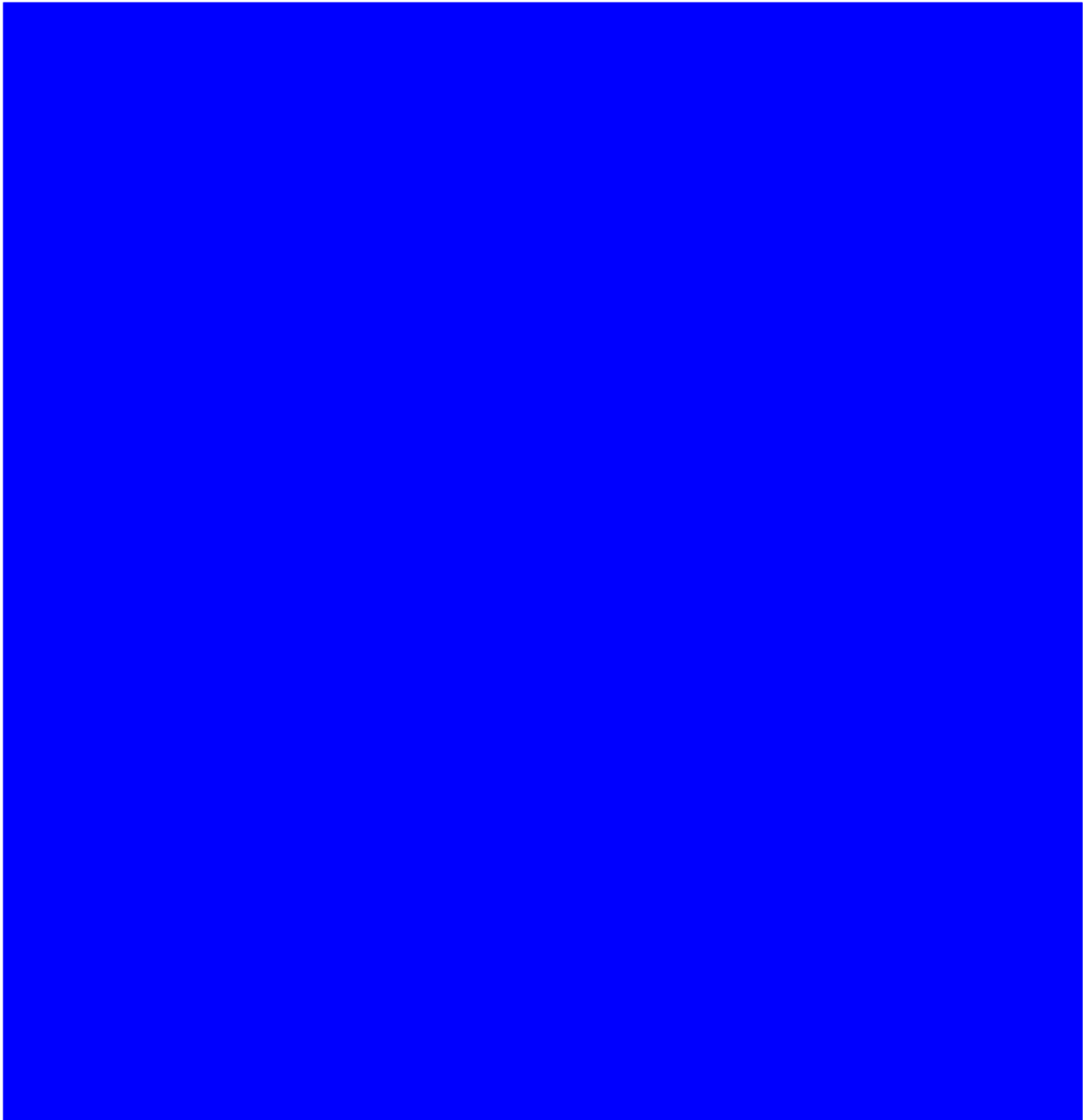
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

West Windsor Township Community Forestry Oversight



As noted above, under § 4-61.1, the STC is specifically responsible for the development, implementation, and monitoring of the CFMP. The STC's role is advisory and policy-oriented; day-to-day implementation is carried out by the Township Engineering Division, Landscape Architect along with the Department of Public Works, the Department of Community Development, and other appropriate staff, professionals, and contracted services.

The following is a flow chart depicting the routing of tree service requests:



2. Partnerships.

Building capacity through partnerships with nonprofit, governmental, and community organizations allows the township to spread workload, increase efficiency, build community connections and support, and more effectively achieve community forestry goals. West Windsor's principal community forestry partnerships are summarized below.

FOWWOS: Since its incorporation in 1996, Friends of West Windsor Open Space has educated residents and decision-makers regarding the importance of preserving open space, woodlands, stream corridors, and farmland, and has helped build public support for open space funding initiatives. FOWWOS was partners with the township in the creation of the Ronald R. Rogers Arboretum, and assists with the Memorial Tree Planting Program. FOWWOS administers the

township's participation in the State's Clean Communities program, supports stewardship and trail projects, and maintains an educational presence at the West Windsor Community Farmers Market.

Historical Society of West Windsor: The Historical Society has more recently engaged with community forestry interests, conducting a tour of the Township Arboretum and volunteering with related projects.

Schools and Scouting Organizations: School groups participate in Arbor Day art and poetry contests and educational programming. Scouting America (fka Boy Scouts of America) and Girl Scout packs and troops have completed numerous tree related service projects at the Ron R. Rogers Arboretum and other township open space properties.

Civic and Business Organizations: The Lions Club, Rotary Club, local retirement community art clubs, and local businesses have sponsored or participated in Arbor Day events and arboretum improvements.

Interdepartmental Coordination: The STC coordinates with the Department of Community Development - Engineering Division, the Department of Public Works, the Environmental Commission, and the Planning Board.

3. Training

CORE Training and CEU's: West Windsor Township has maintained CORE and CEU requirements to retain approved status for the past few decades. Four current STC members and three township employees have completed CORE training. STC members frequently attend the NJ Shade Tree Federation Conferences and participate in various supplemental training programs. STC members also bring extensive independent professional qualifications to deliberations and decisions.

Additional, supplemental training has included several professional seminars and webinars that included presentations on hazardous tree identification, disease and insect infestations, tree biology, safety, and landscape design. Township staff and STC members will continue to acquire the required CEU hours of training to maintain approved status.

In addition, township staff continually reviews several professional journals to keep abreast of the latest developments in arboricultural practice and threats to the community forest. Appropriate topics are discussed during STC meetings and bulletins are posted on the Township web page (westwindsortwp.gov – current as of 2026) and at the arboretum kiosk.

The municipal budget has included line items for continuing education for professional staff and volunteers in the range of \$1,500 to \$3,000 per year. This funding must remain constant to enable the township to fulfill the training requirements under the NJ Community Forestry Act.

Technical Training Needs: It is anticipated that technical training and updated research will be required for township staff and STC members to help implement the action items associated with this plan. The following topics will be investigated:

- Pest and Disease Updates and Management
- Woodland Management
- Tree Recycling
- Pruning and Tree Care
- Tree Inventory / Hazard Tree Identification or Assessment
- Tree Root and Utility Conflicts (above and below ground)
- Safety

4. **Budget History**

Annual Budget / Tree Work Related Expenditures: The following expenditure summary has been copied from a recent West Windsor Township Tree City USA application to offer an example of typical annual tree work expenditures. Annual operational budgets should be projected utilizing the most recent annual expenditure data, as a base, with inflationary adjustments in response to anticipated and proposed actions for a given year. Note the challenges previously discussed in section 3.c. “Barriers to Success and Trends,” regarding inflationary costs and future operations:

Expenditure Summary

	Provider	Qty	Type	# of Species	Cost
1.	Community Group/Scouts Planting	0	Evergreen Shrubs	1 Species	\$ 375.00
2.	Public Lands Contractor	31	Deciduous Trees	15 Species	\$ 17,834.00
3.	Public Lands Contractor	0	Evergreen Trees	0 Species	\$ 0.00
4.	Landscape Contractor	0	Street & Park Trees	0 Species	\$ 0.00
<u>Tree Planting Subtotal.</u>					<u>\$ 18,209.00</u>
5.	Public Lands Contractor and Arborists		StumpGrind/Remove (479 trees).		\$131,683.75
6.	Department Public Works		Tree Maintenance 1091 hrs. x \$23.73		\$ 25,898.73
7.	Contracted Arborist Treatment (EAB etc)		Contracted Tree Maintenance		\$ 6,641.84
<u>Tree Maintenance Subtotal.</u>					<u>\$ 164,224.32</u>
8.	Arbor Day Contest Awards / Donated Funds				\$ 95.00
9.	STF Membership / Conferences / Training		Budgeted Funds		\$ 0.00
<u>Tree Advocacy Subtotal.</u>					<u>\$ 45.00</u>
<u>Total Tree Work</u>					<u>\$182,528.32</u>

a. Tree Inventory Budget:

The township completed a Street Tree Inventory in 2026 at a cost of \$20,000, under the \$25,000 to \$50,000 originally estimated for this task. Note: the 2026 inventory scope was tailored to the West Windsor community forestry program, which it was determined would not significantly benefit from the more enhanced digital format inventory programs that are available, and thus reduced cost were facilitated with no reduction in the function of the street tree inventory relative to the West Windsor program.

Similarly tailored open space and civic facility tree inventories are contemplated and could involve expenditures of \$7,500 to \$15,000. As available, assistance grants for this work could be

sought, but it should be anticipated that minimum matching expenditures of \$5,000 to \$10,000 will be required if grants are awarded.

b. Community Forestry Management Plan Budget

In 2025, \$5,000 was budgeted to hire a consultant to assist with the production of this CFMP. It should be anticipated that a budget of \$5,000 to \$7,500 will be needed in the 2029 West Windsor Township budget to assist with the next plan. The lower figure will be necessary if township staff can undertake a major portion of the work and/or if a successful NJUCF assistance grant is applied for and awarded, the higher figure should cover the cost to engage a tree professional

c. Training

The municipal budget has included line items for continuing education for professional staff and STC members in the range of \$1,500 to \$3,000 per year. This funding must remain constant to enable the township to fulfill the training requirements under the NJ Community Forestry Act. Recommended annual actions include:

- Completion of CORE training by new Shade Tree Commissioners
- One or more staff members participating in Shade Tree Federation Conference
- One or more Shade Tree Commissioners participating in courses or webinars offered by local Universities (e.g. Rutgers, Penn State, etc.).

5. Equipment

The West Windsor Township Department of Public Works maintains and utilizes the following equipment for work on public trees. A more specific listing of equipment is included as an appendix to the document. That department budget must include future funding to maintain, replace, and expand equipment to meet the continued and expanded actions needed to sustain the community forest and particularly the street tree resource:

- Bucket truck and mats
- Chippers
- Dump trucks
- Chain saws
- Hand saws and pruners

III. Community Engagement and Well-Being

1. Community Engagement

Trees provide benefits that positively affect human health, safety, and well-being, including heat mitigation through shade and transpiration cooling, stormwater reduction, aesthetic value, and improved outcomes in settings such as schools and workplaces. These benefits are greatest when the right trees are planted in the right place, in the right way, and are maintained throughout their lifespan. This section describes how West Windsor Township has engaged, and will continue to engage, the community in the planning and stewardship of its community forest resource, and addresses the equitable distribution of, and access to, the tree resource across Township neighborhoods.

- Shade Tree Commission: The STC conducts monthly open public meetings, with agendas and minutes posted on the township website and where community input and involvement is welcomed.
- Arbor Day: For many decades, the STC organized and administered the West Windsor Township Arbor Day celebration. School children and their parents are attracted to the program via art or poetry contests and inclusion of choral or music groups, clubs and scouting organizations, as well as sponsoring businesses, in the celebration. In addition to these features each year, tree planting and care demonstrations are conducted as part of the ceremonies. Saplings from the NJ Forestry Nursery are distributed with planting instructions to the Arbor Day attendees.
- Memorial Tree Planting: A memorial tree program is offered at the arboretum. Donations are accepted through non-profit organizations to plant trees with engraved pavers to memorialize persons and events associated with the community. This program has proven to be highly successful focusing the desire of the community for memorial tree planting and enhancing development of the arboretum.
- Arboricultural Education: The initiation and development of the Ronald R. Rogers Arboretum has been the largest accomplishment for public education over the first five years. In the second five years, a kiosk was implemented at the arboretum. The kiosk has been utilized by the STC to disseminate information on various arboricultural practices throughout the year, including planting, mulching, pruning, plant selection, and the value of trees, to name a few. Additionally, located at the corner of Clarksville Road and Princeton Hightstown Road, the arboretum is home to the township's programable digital communication signage. The sign is also used to broadcast information on STC activities. Each December the township decorates one of the mature evergreens and hosts a holiday tree celebration. Most recent holiday celebrations have included drone light shows in lieu of previous fireworks presentations.

The STC has developed several policy papers on arboricultural subjects or issues, such as Emerald Ash Borer and Bacterial Leaf Scorch that were posted on the Township web page and submitted to local newspapers in the form of letters to the editor.

- Projects: The township has partnered with the Lions and Rotary clubs, high school clubs, a local retirement community art club, a local outdoors store, and several Girl Scout Bronze and Gold projects and Eagle Scout Service projects to complete various elements (trails, benches, bat houses, tree planting etc.) of the arboretum and other township open space parcels. Some of the Bronze and Gold and Eagle Scout projects involving tree planting and landscape development have been completed on township open space properties.
- FAQ's and Q&A: On most regular work days, the Township Landscape Architect is available to receive and answer or direct resident requests concerning the township's tree resource. These requests cover a broad range of topics but common subjects are tree pruning, tree planting requests, sidewalk repair, and disease or pest management.

Posting of notices on the township web page has been a continuing means of reaching out to the community regarding care and appreciation of the community forest resource. STC will continue to explore expansion of this aspect of community outreach.

2. Equity:

West Windsor Township has a strong history of equitable distribution of the community forest resource throughout the community regardless of land use or value. The township has very advanced standards for the creation and set-aside of open space including a comprehensive Greenbelt system. These standards also require inclusion of robust landscape elements to enhance and buffer neighborhoods and commercial centers. Land use boards have been very diligent in upholding equitable implementation of these standards, originally developed as an initiative of the STC. Thus, open space and parks, and woodlands, are integrated into all township neighborhoods and fully accessible, including many bicycle and pedestrian routes to and through these natural areas. Hardscape development, such as seating areas and recreation courts, also include areas dedicated to landscape planting with trees for seasonal interest and shade.

In combination, these actions have resulted in neighborhoods, centers, and parks that buffer typical urban micro-climatic effects (e.g. heat islands and strong winds), enhance air quality, reduce pollutants (air and water), and create an aesthetic and pleasant environment. Continued adherence to these standards as future land use decisions are made is essential to the maintenance of the robust and equitable distribution of natural landscape elements and the tremendous well-being benefits afforded.

The 2020 census data utilized for the NJ DEP Environmental Justice Law – Overburdened Communities Mapping, indicates that two census block groups (or neighborhoods) meet the criteria a “Low Income and Minority.” This designation indicates that the 2020 census recorded: (1) at least 35 percent of the households qualify as low-income households; (2) as least 40 percent of the residents identify as minority or a members of a State recognized tribal community. This map is included with this document in the “Maps” section.

One neighborhood (or census block group) north of Route One is bordered by: Canal Pointe Boulevard; the Mercer County Princeton Country Club Golf Course; NJ Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park and preserved Township Greenbelt lands; and the Canal Pointe patio-home and condominium residential community. This neighborhood is home to student apartment style housing for the Princeton Theological Seminary, which was recently redeveloped with robust tree and landscape improvements. The block adjoining this neighborhood has been redeveloped since the 2020 census as luxury apartments with the inclusion of a 20% affordable component. Again, this neighborhood was robustly planted with trees and landscape at that time and benefits from close proximity to open space including the greenbelt.

The second neighborhood (or census block group) is located near the Princeton Junction Train Station bordered to the east by the northeast corridor Amtrak line and local NJ Transit trainline. The block is bordered by Alexander Road to the north and a wide maturely wooded swath of the greenbelt to the west. The neighborhood consists of mixed-density housing (luxury single-family, townhomes, and apartments) inclusive of low-income and accessible housing components, recently constructed within a decade of the 2020 census, with robust tree and landscape planting. As noted, the entire block is also bordered by a wide swath of the greenbelt, to the west, but is also bifurcated by a lesser but substantial branch of preserved greenbelt woodland. Natural resources, including canopy trees are not lacking in this neighborhood.

While West Windsor Township does not currently identify significant disparities in access to community natural resources, the township's future planning, assessments, and initiatives will continue to consider the distribution of canopy cover, access to open space, and similar community forestry benefits throughout the Township. The STC could examine the "3-30-300" rule created by Professor Cecil Konijnendijk as a benchmark to evaluate existing and future housing locations. The rule is 3 trees visible from a window, 30% as a neighborhood canopy coverage goal, and within 300 meters (984 feet or a 5-minute walk) from a residence, workplace or place of learning to a park or green space. Future actions should include a review of any applicable health and accessibility standards

IV. Community Forest Management Plan Implementation

This section presents West Windsor Township's overall community forestry Goals for 2026 to 2030, together with the Elements, Objectives, and Action Items to implement the goals. Actions that are typically implemented on a continual or annual basis are listed first, following the overall program goals. Actions specifically recommended with this CFMP follow, with a five-year recommended Activity Schedule.

Overall Program Goals:

1. **Sustain and Protect:** Maintain and protect the community forest resource on public properties in a sustainable, productive, and safe condition.
2. **Grow and Expand:** Expand the Community Forest Resource to further enhance the visual and environmental quality of township streets, neighborhoods, parks, civic spaces, and schools, while maintaining an equitable distribution of the Community Forest Resource across all neighborhoods.
3. **Educate and Engage:** Educate and engage the community and community leaders on the value, need, and proper methods to maintain and expand a healthy and resilient Community Forest Resource.

Continual Action Items:

These Action Items are typically conducted on a continual or annual basis under the existing West Windsor Township Community Forestry Program. These items are categorized under three basic goal elements – **Sustain; Grow; and Educate**. Continuing action items are critical tasks necessary to meet the program goals, and support many of the proposed plan elements, objectives, and actions that follow, and are intended to guide additional forestry program actions through the next five years.

Sustain:

- Monitor implementation and feedback regarding township ordinances governing tree removal, replacement, protection, planting, and plant species restrictions.
- Review and monitor current and emerging tree pest and disease infestation (e.g. EAB) and determine if modified or new actions are required to best protect the community tree resources, advising administration and public to the extent appropriate.
- Review CFMP prescribed activities and budgets for coming year.
- Caucus with Mayor and Township Council regarding emerging or developing tree issues.
- Develop and present annual STC report to Township Council.
- Submit budget requests to Administration
- Assist with the development of any new or modified regulations.

Grow:

- Maintain and implement a clearly defined process for the prompt review and response to tree concerns received from residents.
- Explore opportunities for grants to fund forestry projects.
- Monitor the condition of Ronald R. Rogers Arboretum specimen and woodland trees. Offer recommendations to improve maintenance practices and modify or amend the planting to sustain the mission of the Arboretum.
- Administer the honorarium tree planting program at the arboretum.
- Monitor implementation and feedback regarding township ordinances governing tree removal, replacement, protection, planting, and plant species restrictions.
- Assist with the implementation of volunteer tree planting projects on township open space and facility properties.

Educate:

- Monitor for emerging and developing issues related to tree disease and insect infestation.
- Investigate current arboricultural standards such as those published by state, national and international governments and organizations, trade groups, professional associations and research groups, for applicability to the West Windsor Township.
- Develop and distribute advisories regarding emerging and developing tree issues.
- Investigate training opportunities including webinars, seminars, classes, and demonstrations to educate all persons involved in the township community forest administration, and maintain required continuing education credits.
- Plan and implement annual Arbor Day celebration.

Proposed Elements, Objectives and Action Items:

Element A: Maintain

Objective: Plan, fund and implement maintenance actions needed to **maintain** the community forest resource.

Action Items:

Street Trees

- Plan for the removal of dead trees based upon the Street Tree Inventory findings and subsequent observations, utilizing annual operating budget funding.
- Develop a workable plan for cyclical canopy clearance pruning of street trees anticipating that over 50% of the tree population will likely require such action over the next decade (2027-2037).
- Review budget requirements to implement the plan for cyclical canopy clearance pruning of street trees over the next decade.
- Develop a plan for the cyclical observation of trees exhibiting decline, likely by the Township Landscape Architect, record results, and implement pruning, treatment, or removal of trees that present concern, utilizing annual operating budget funding.
- Periodically (annually and/or continual) review and update Street Tree Inventory as tree removal and replacement tasks are implemented

Open Space and Facility Trees

- Plan for the development of an inventory, plan(s), or listing of trees present in Township Parks and Civic Spaces or Facilities, to help develop future community forestry planning and actions.

Element B: Protect

Objective: Plan, fund and implement actions needed to protect the community forest resource.

Action Items:

- Review and plan for the update the Community Forestry Management Plan on a cyclical basis.
- Publicize and seek input on Community Forestry Plan objectives and actions.
- Review Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation and management, observing trees under treatment. This task has typically been implemented by the Township Landscape Architect.
- Review, monitor and resolve any loss of tree canopy within open space and greenbelt areas due to improper encroachment, or natural deforestation events.
- Revisit tree mulch ring application guidelines and outreach efforts. Publicize guidance regarding the benefits of proper mulching, and detriments of poor mulching practices.

Element C: Sustain

Objective: Plan and implement actions to help sustain the community forest resource.

Action Items:

- Evaluate the understory trees planted as replacement of ash trees and determine those species that should be continued or limited as replacement tree selections. Update the understory tree list.
- Plan for the gradual replacement of highly invasive, exotic tree species along township streets and within parks, in particular *Pyrus calleryana*, Callery Pear, and possibly *Acer platanoides*, Norway Maple. Develop a list of appropriate alternate species.
- Research and consider the potential to add newer understory tree selections to the tree list as new selections are introduced by the nursery industry. Avoid non-native species with invasive potential.
- Research and consider the potential for tree species that do not make optimal street tree selections as cul-de-sac and median island replacement trees to foster improved diversity and seasonal interest.
- Monitor new and replacement plantings to limit planting of species presently above or approaching 20% of street tree population or trees of genera approaching 30% of the population. In particular, carefully manage the planting of all *Acer*, maple and particularly *Acer rubrum*, red maple, as well as *Quercus rubra*, red oak species, based upon Street Tree Inventory findings and recommendations.
- Monitor tree canopy cover and open space distribution in new neighborhoods to discover any limitations regarding the equitable distribution of the tree forest resource.

- Coordinate with the Township Office of Emergency Management to incorporate community forestry considerations into wildfire and storm-readiness, response, and recovery planning.

Element D: Grow

Objective: Plan, fund and implement actions to grow the community forest resource.

Action Items:

- Continue to facilitate the planting of new street trees along any new streets developed in the community. Coordinate with the Land Use and Engineering Divisions and their consultants to review and record new plantings into the Street Tree Inventory.
- Plan for the review and planting of new street trees at locations recorded as missing trees in the Street Tree Inventory.
- Establish clear guidelines for the planting of new street trees on existing streets, including cul-de-sac and median islands, with consideration for right tree, right place criteria. Guidance should include prohibition of street tree planting in locations with overhead wires, and/or narrow tree lawns.
- Review and consider the potential benefits of implementing new planting at legacy or newly acquired open space properties, based upon tree inventory review, as an enhancement of the property, neighborhood, and community forest. Coordinate implementation by contracted or volunteer services (e.g. Scouts).
- Facilitate the planting of new trees within open space properties based upon inventory and analysis of these properties.

Element E: Expand

Objective: Review, plan, fund and implement potential actions to expand the community forest resource.

Action Items:

- Monitor the preservation of new open space by the Township. Observe the tree canopy coverage and condition within any new open space areas.
- Re-visit the Tree Canopy Goal and update the findings and recommendations.

Element F: Educate

Objective: Contemplate, research, and publicize data, findings, and guidance regarding the value and need for a robust community forest to improve the health, safety and welfare of the community and educate residents. This should include review of emerging or problematic methods of tree maintenance.

Action Items:

- Publicize and distribute forest resource guidance documents at community events.
- Monitor the preservation of new open space by the Township. Observe the tree canopy coverage and condition within any new open space areas.
- Consider incorporation of unique trees in the community into public education programming.
- Review and publicize recommendations regarding new legislation regulating exotic and invasive plant species. Consider both banned species as well as recommendations for alternate selections.

Schedule of Community Forestry Plan Activities:

The Shade Tree Commission and Township Staff together will be responsible for the implementation of these activities as or unless otherwise noted.

2026-2027

- Publicize and seek input on the current CFMP.
- Complete CFMP and submit to NJDEP for approval.
- Initiate review of Township Open Space / Preserve and Facility Tree Inventory Data by STC and staff.
- Complete on-going actions related to recently adopted bamboo control ordinance.
- Complete continuing education requirements with on Shade Tree Commissioner and/or one staff member attending the Shade Tree Federation Conference (core training or educational sessions) and courses or webinars offered by local Universities.

2027-2028

- Coordinate with Engineering and Land Use Divisions to review and record new street tree plantings into the street tree inventory.
- Review EAB management actions.
- Plan for the incorporation of unique community trees into Arbor Day or similar events and activities.
- Develop a plan to help educate and publicize recommendations regarding state legislation regulating exotic and invasive plant species.
- Caucus with Township Office of Emergency Management regarding community forest considerations and storm response and recovery events.
- Review township Street Inventory project and determine if street tree data can be expanded to develop an improved street tree inventory, relative to any new technological data or programs being implemented by the Township Engineering Division.
- Develop a long-term plan for the removal and replacement of *Pyrus calleryana*, and *Acer platanoides* (highly invasive exotic species) street trees.

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- Complete continuing education requirements with on Shade Tree Commissioner and/or one staff member attending the Shade Tree Federation Conference (core training or educational sessions) and courses or webinars offered by local Universities.
- Meet with the Township Office of Emergency Management to review and coordinate incorporation of community forestry considerations into wildfire and storm-readiness, response, and recovery planning.

2028-2029

- Initiate review of CFMP for upcoming update.
- Coordinate completion Township Open Space / Preserve and Facility Tree Inventory Data, including any newly acquired properties.
- Review Township Tree Canopy Goal, with consideration for equitable distribution of the community tree resource.
- Develop recommendations regarding the understory tree species initial planted with the EAB management project.
- Publish new guidance regarding tree ring mulching.
- Complete continuing education requirements with on Shade Tree Commissioner and/or one staff member attending the Shade Tree Federation Conference (core training or educational sessions) and courses or webinars offered by local Universities.

2029-2030

- Develop guidance regarding the planting of new street trees on existing streets.
- Review Township tree removal ordinance. Offer any recommendations to the Township Administration.
- Complete continuing education requirements with on Shade Tree Commissioner and/or one staff member attending the Shade Tree Federation Conference (core training or educational sessions) and courses or webinars offered by local Universities.
- Initiate and complete Community Forestry Management Plan for 2031 to 2035.

2. Budgets:

The following budgets are offered as projections and a guide, and are subject to change each year according to priorities based upon review with administration and adoption by Township Council.

a.	2026-2027	<u>\$ 174,800</u>
	• Tree Inventory, Contracted (Capital) -	\$20,000
	• Community Forestry Management Plan, Contracted (Capital) –	\$ 0
	• Training (Operating, Engineering Division) –	\$ 1,000
	• Engineering Division Staff (Operating) -	\$20,000
	• Public Works Tree Work (Operating) -	\$70,000
	○ 2,000 hrs. x \$35/hr.	
	• Contracted Tree Treatment (Capital) –	\$10,000
	• Contracted Tree Removal (Capital, PLM, Emergency Work) –	\$25,000
	• Contracted Tree Planting (Capital, PLM) –	\$25,000
	• Volunteer Work (Meetings, Arbor Day, Oversight, Education / Promotion) -	\$ 3,800
	○ 100 hrs. x \$38/hr.	
b.	2027-2028	<u>\$ 177,300</u>
	• Tree Inventory, Contracted (Capital) -	\$ 2,500
	• Community Forestry Management Plan, Contracted (Capital) –	\$ 0
	• Training (Operating, Engineering Division) –	\$ 1,000
	• Engineering Division Staff (Operating) -	\$20,000
	• Public Works Tree Work (Operating) -	\$75,000
	○ 2,000 hrs. x \$35/hr.	
	• Contracted Tree Treatment (Capital) –	\$10,000
	• Contracted Tree Removal (Capital, PLM, Emergency Work) –	\$25,000
	• Contracted Tree Planting (Capital, PLM) –	\$40,000
	• Volunteer Work (Meetings, Arbor Day, Oversight, Education / Promotion) -	\$ 3,800
	○ 100 hrs. x \$38/hr.	
c.	2028-2029	<u>\$ 194,800</u>
	• Tree Inventory, Contracted (Capital) -	\$ 5,000
	• Community Forestry Management Plan, Contracted (Capital) –	\$ 7,000
	• Training (Operating, Engineering Division) –	\$ 1,000
	• Engineering Division Staff (Operating) -	\$20,000
	• Public Works Tree Work (Operating) -	\$80,000
	○ 2,000 hrs. x \$40/hr.	
	• Contracted Tree Treatment (Capital) –	\$10,000
	• Contracted Tree Removal (Capital, PLM, Emergency Work) –	\$25,000
	• Contracted Tree Planting (Capital, PLM) –	\$50,000
	• Volunteer Work (Meetings, Arbor Day, Oversight, Education / Promotion) -	\$ 3,800
	○ 100 hrs. x \$38/hr.	

d. 2029-2030	\$ 201,800
• Tree Inventory, Contracted (Capital) -	\$ 1,000
• Community Forestry Management Plan, Contracted (Capital) –	\$ 0
• Training (Operating, Engineering Division) –	\$ 2,000
• Engineering Division Staff (Operating) -	\$20,000
• Public Works Tree Work (Operating) -	\$85,000
o 2,000 hrs. x \$42.50/hr.	
• Contracted Tree Treatment (Capital) –	\$10,000
• Contracted Tree Removal (Capital, PLM, Emergency Work) –	\$30,000
• Contracted Tree Planting (Capital, PLM) –	\$50,000
• Volunteer Work (Meetings, Arbor Day, Oversight, Education / Promotion) -	\$ 3,800
o 100 hrs. x \$38/hr.	

VI. Appendix Documents. (TBD..... REVIEW and UPDATE)

APPENDIX DOCUMENTS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF APPENDIX DOCUMENT #1, HAVE BEEN EXCLUDED FROM THIS VERSION TO REDUCE SIZE

AN AUXILIARY DOCUMENT TO INCLUDE THE APPENDIX DOCUMENTS IS A WORK IN PROGRESS AT THIS TIME. MOST OF THE APPENDIX DOCUMENTS LISTED ARE PRESENTLY POSTED TO THE STC PAGE OF THE TOWNSHIP WEBSITE, (westwindsortwp.gov)

1. West Windsor Department of Public Works Tree Equipment Inventory
2. Shade Tree Commission and Trees Ordinances
3. W.W. Twp. Tree Canopy Goal
4. Bacterial Leaf Scorch – Resident Advisory
5. Gouty Oak Gall – Resident Advisory
6. Woolly Adelgid – Resident Advisory
7. “How to Prune Young Shade Trees” – Resident Handout
8. Tree Maintenance – Resident Advisory
9. Mulching Do’s and Don’ts
10. Dangerous Trees Notice – Township Form
11. “When a Storm Strikes” – Resident Handout
12. “Dos and Don’ts” with Storm Damaged Trees – Resident Advisory
13. Arbor Day Art Contest Flyer
14. Street Tree Inventory Report (Summary)

END.

West Windsor Township Community Forestry Management Plan 2026-2030 Appendix Documents

Appendix 1. West Windsor Department of Public Works Tree Equipment Inventory

The following is a listing of the equipment utilized by the West Windsor Township Department of Public Works to undertake tree work conducted by staff. This is current as of **August, 2026.**

<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Year of Mfg.</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>.</u>
1	2021	Freightliner/Altec Aerial Lift – Model LR7-E70	
1	2015	M118R Mobark Chipper	
1	2010	Bobcat T770 w/ grapple	
1	2019	Freightliner 108SC Dump Truck	
1	2017	8-Ton Cam Tilt Trailer	
3		Stihl MS391 20" Chainsaws	
1		Stihl MS 362 20" Chainsaw	
1		Stihl MS451 20" Chainsaw	
1		Stihl MS441C 32" Chainsaw	
1		Stihl MS362 20" Chainsaw	
1		Stihl MS193T 14" Chainsaw	
2		Stihl HT130 12" pole saws	
2		Stihl HT131 12" pole saws	
2		Stihl HT 133 12" pole saws	
1		Stihl HT 130 6' fixed 12" pole saw	
1		Hydraulic Operated 13" pole saw	

END.