

**COMMUNITY FORESTRY
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**THIRD 5-YEAR PLAN
January 2016 – December 2020**



**CITY OF PLAINFIELD
UNION COUNTY,
NEW JERSEY**

**Prepared By:
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CME ASSOCIATES**

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Community Forestry Management Plan

Municipal/County Information Form

Municipality City of Plainfield

County Union County

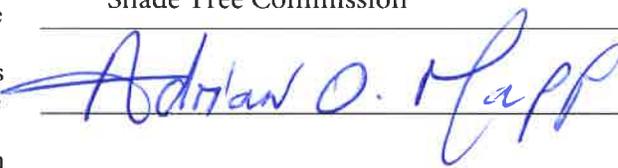
Address 515 Watchung Avenue
Plainfield, NJ 07060

Contact Name and Title April M. Stefel, LLA Planning Division Liaison

Phone # 908-753-3421

Fax # and E-mail 908-226-2587 april.stefel@plainfieldnj.gov

Organization Name Shade Tree Commission

Mayor/County Freeholder's Signature 

Date of Management Plan Submission October 5, 2016

Time Period Covered in Management Plan 2016-2020

- Community Stewardship Incentive Program (CSIP) Practices Identified in Management Plan
- CSIP #1 Training
 - CSIP #2 Community Forestry Ordinance Establishment
 - CSIP #3 Public Education and Awareness
 - CSIP #4 Arbor Day
 - CSIP #5 Tree Inventory
 - CSIP #6 Hazard Tree Assessment
 - CSIP #7 Storm Damage Assessment
 - CSIP #8 Tree Maintenance and Removals
 - CSIP #9 Insect and Disease Management
 - CSIP #10 Wildfire Protection
 - CSIP #11 Tree Planting
 - CSIP #12 Tree Recycling
 - CSIP #13 Sidewalk Maintenance Program
 - CSIP #14 Storm Water Management
 - CSIP #15 Other

Official Use Only Certification

The above named municipality/county 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 the NJ Community Forestry Council and is approved for the period covered.

Signed _____ State Forester _____ Approved date _____

2. INTRODUCTION

A. Mission Statement

The purpose of this Third Community Forestry Management Plan ("5-year Plan") is to continue to promote a sustainable and productive community forest and shade tree resource that will improve the quality of life for the residents of Plainfield. The intention of this 5-year Plan is to aid the City in improving, maintaining and increasing Plainfield's urban forest as well as to encourage the community to become involved in these stewardship efforts. This 5-year Plan will continue guiding the Plainfield Shade Tree Commission ("STC") in promoting a sustainable and productive community forest.

B. Goals and Objectives

Now that the STC has been well established in Plainfield, this third 5-year Plan continues with the effective programs the STC has accomplished as well as suggests some aspirational goals. The Commission's main focus for the next five years will be to plant and prune in our urban forest and set consistent policy through ordinance revision.

The following is a list of goals and objectives that the STC believes are attainable and will be the most beneficial for Plainfield's tree resource.

Goal #1: Plant and Prune: Expand and maintain the City's tree resource.

Objectives: Maximize financial resources by selecting tree specimens that provide the optimal return on investment.

Plant and/or prune trees with funds received from grants, municipal budget allocation, improvement and road reconstruction projects, as well as volunteer resources.

Prune high priority hazardous trees/high traffic areas and perform preventive pruning for younger trees.

Maintain on-going record of available planting locations, to be filled upon availability of funds.

Goal #2: Policy: To strengthen the Ordinance to preserve trees.

Objectives: Update existing tree ordinances that are contained in the Municipal Code regarding the planting and removal of shade trees and the responsibility for management of city trees.

Revise the existing inconsistent ordinances in order to reconcile and modernize the content.

Relocate the revised Ordinance to the Land Use section of Municipal Code.

Continue site plan reviews and on-site observations to recommend individual trees to save for preservation and species for planting.

Goal #3: Outreach: Promote general tree awareness and stewardship amongst the community.

Objectives: Continue working with the local community, and students in particular, on educating as to the importance of trees and their preservation.

Submit tree related articles to local media, such as the members of the local blogging community, the Mayor's weekly e-letter, the City Clerk's e-blast and the PMUA newsletter

Continue with the annual City Arbor Day program.

Update STC links on City's website to be more user friendly.

Use municipal and community publications as a means to publicize STC and direct traffic to STC, City website link.

Goal #4: Inventory: To provide safe rights-of-way and public parks for residents and visitors of Plainfield.

Objectives: Continue street tree observations of the four (4) City Wards by STC volunteers, as to required maintenance and/or removal of hazardous trees.

Input data identified from individual Ward observations into Excel/computer program to maintain a list for Department of Public Works ("Public Works") to address.

Apply for grant opportunities if available.

Goal #5: Education: To continue to expand volunteers' and City employees' knowledge on trees and tree resource management.

Continue to seek out training opportunities for STC volunteers, City employees and Public Works employees.

Continue to work along with the Mayor and City Administrator as well as the Planning Division and the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment and the Historic Preservation Commission.

C. Liability Statement

Plainfield is a Tree City USA recipient and has an interest in protecting its tree resource. The City recognizes the benefits trees provide and the aesthetic appeal they bring to the community. Trees are an immeasurable asset that require care, maintenance, and eventual replacement. In addition to planting "the right tree in the right place," we can help ensure that community trees not only contribute to the environmental and economic vitality of the area, but also reduce the potential hazards to public safety. The STC must work within a reasonable budget that may not immediately meet all the needs of the community forest as a whole. Therefore, it is the intent of the 5-year Plan that available resources will be prioritized as the City works towards achieving its goal towards a healthy forest with commensurate reduced risks to public safety.

A series of Community Forestry Management Plans are needed in order to maintain the tree resource that exists and to continue to expand on the community's forest and shade tree resource.

Plainfield acknowledges that not all hazards can be predicted and that situations may occur without our knowledge. It is for this reason that we will continue to be proactive in our approach to systematically obtaining a healthier community and shade tree resource. One of the goals listed in this plan is to continue surveying City streets for hazardous trees that will position the City to take corrective action prior to structural tree failures and other hazardous tree related conditions. Not all hazardous conditions will be predicted, although, with good maintenance and care, the probability of an accident will be greatly reduced.

By following this 5-year Plan, the City is devoting reasonable levels of resources in a planned manner to reduce the number of tree related accidents, thereby reducing its exposure to liabilities while increasing public safety.

3. COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Plainfield has borne the weakened economy over the past five (5) years. The amount of funding available for trees in Plainfield is essentially the STC's budget. Grants from sources other than Union County have not been available or have been very limited and exclusive. The City is not in the financial condition to provide enough funding for advertising or for any type of sophisticated tree inventory. All of the tree related consulting work is performed by the volunteers, many of which have full time jobs and/or additionally volunteer their time to other community and municipal organizations. The Commission's liaison, a Licensed Landscape Architect and employee of the Planning Division, provides support; however, only a portion of her time can be allotted to shade tree related projects. Nonetheless, the City has planted over 700 street trees in the past five (5) years with considerable help from Union County grant program Greening of Union County. In addition, Plainfield was successful in its pursuit of a spring 2016 CSIP #11 Planting Grant in the amount of \$27,900 in order to replant certain neighborhoods in the City's 4th Ward.

The City has made extensive progress in eliminating tree hazards. In the absence of funding for a citywide tree survey, efforts at remedying tree hazards consist of STC members surveying the City's four (4) Wards and listing maintenance issues. Public Works has made a valiant effort to address these issues. John Louise, the Superintendent of Public Works, has an excellent working relationship with members of the STC. A limited number of Public Works employees are designated to work on tree related care during the summer months. Even though there is enough work for a year round department, Public Works does its best to address the STC's list of hazard tree locations on an on-going basis. In addition, in the fall of 2015, STC used part of its budget to hire a private contractor to do pruning on a number of high traffic roadways in the City and PSE&G pruned a number of roadways.

Also, replacement trees have been planted where hazard and other trees were removed for roadway reconstruction projects. This multi-year program is ongoing and the STC is actively working to ensure the open planting locations left by the project will be replaced with a new tree at a 2 to 1 ratio.

All regular members of the STC are CORE trained and typically STC members and Public Works employees exceed their annual continuing education requirements.

Publicity regarding tree events is posted on the City's website, local blogs including, Plaintiff II and Plainfield Today, in addition to posters in City Hall.

Over the span of the prior CFMP, the tree selection process has been the largest single challenge for the City's STC. The tree planting projects take into account growth habits, form, mature size, species, variety and hydrology of the planting area. In the last five (5) years, 18 varieties of street trees were installed. The quest to plant the 'right tree in the right place' has helped Plainfield reduce utility conflicts. It has also mitigated risk to homeowners and city owned property by reducing the potential for damage to walls, sidewalks and curbing. Smart species selection also increases the rate of the trees' survival in their planting location. The STC continues to improve and revise their planting list based on the success rate of previous plantings.

The STC has excellent working relationships with the Mayor and City Administration. In addition, the Chairperson presented to City Council in 2015, addressing the quantities, species and locations of all plantings completed within the 4 wards of the City.

The City Master Plan recognizes the importance of the urban forest and the 5-year Plan provides for the care of this valuable resource. The STC will suggest that this document be referenced in the next revision of the Master Plan scheduled for 2019.

4. COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

A. Shade Tree Commission and Duties

The Plainfield STC is responsible for carrying out the goals and objectives of this 5-year Plan. The STC grew out of the Ten Cities Tree Committee, which was formed in 2004 to work with the New Jersey Tree Federation and the State Division of Parks and Forestry on managing the City's urban forest. STC was formed in 2005 and the STC Ordinance was enacted in 2006. The City has been a Tree City USA since 2010. The STC consists of five (5) regular voting members and two (2) alternates with a mayoral designee who is a City employee. In addition, two (2) City Council members can serve as liaisons to STC. Appointments are staggered for five (5) year terms.

Shade Tree Commission 2016

Peter Simone – Chairperson
Janet Massey
Mary Burgwinkle, Secretary
Oscar Riba
Kelley Boero
Barbara Spellmeyer – Alternate #1

Lynne Wallace - Alternate #2
Reverend Tracey Brown – City Council Liaison
Carmen Louis, DPW, Mayoral Designee
John Louise – DPW Superintendent, Mayoral Designee - Alternate
April M. Stefel, LLA - Planning Division Liaison

The company/representative responsible for the 5-year Plan guidance and procedures is CME Associates and Shari M. Spero, CTE #465.

B. Departments and Agencies

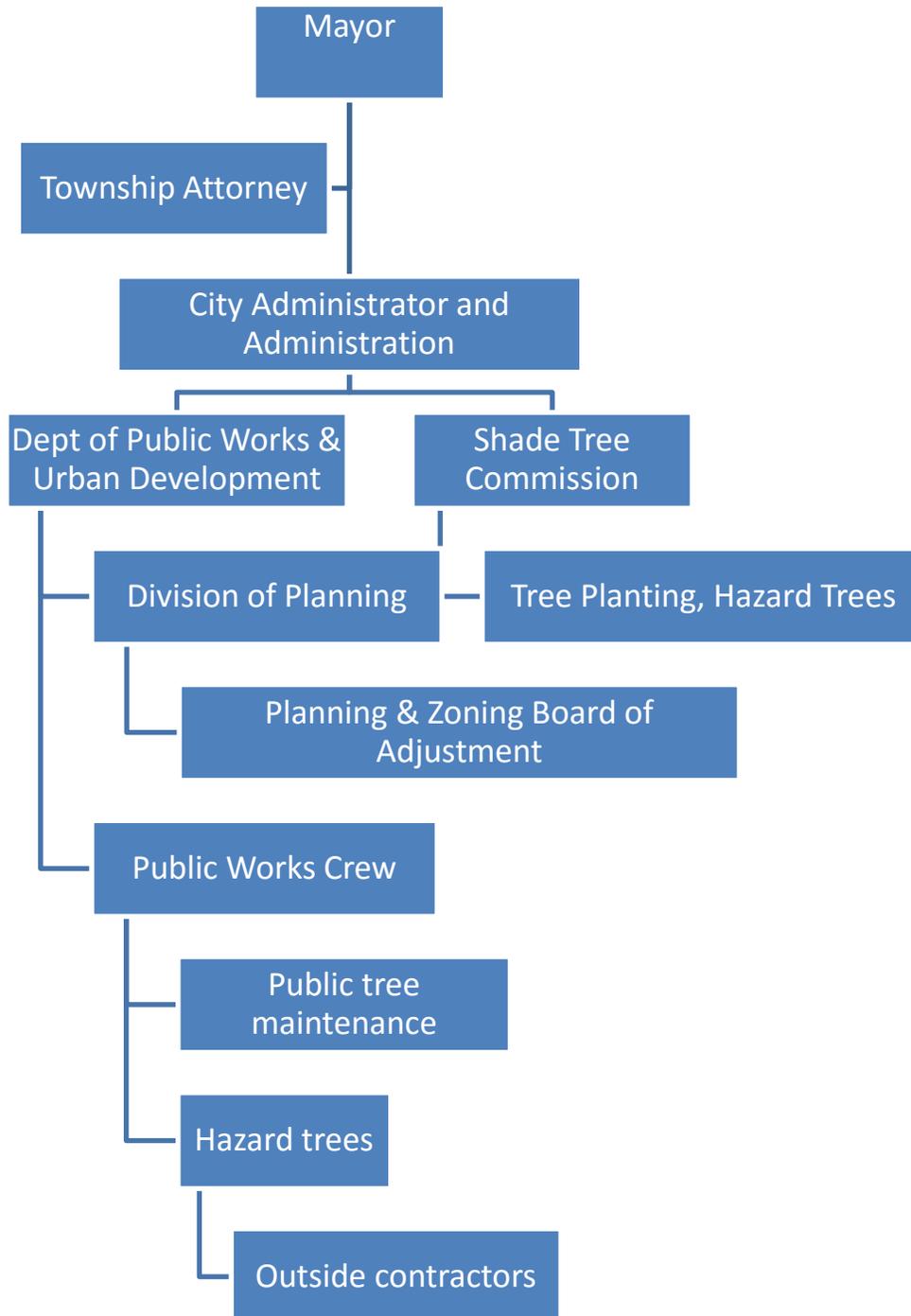
The STC works closely with the Public Works through John Louise and with the Division of Planning through its director, William Nierstedt, and the STC Liaison, April M. Stefel.

The STC reviews all subdivision and site plans submitted to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment for compliance with the City Ordinances and provides landscaping recommendations. It also works with Historic Preservation Commission when necessary. The members advise on tree planting selection and help evaluate questionable trees for hazard removals.

If a complaint is received by the City regarding tree service requests, a communication is sent to the STC Chairperson via email for verification. The Chairman performs a site visit and provides recommendations to Public Works. A joint decision is made on how to address the complaint. Moving forward, Public Works issues a work order to remedy the hazard. When Public Works is unable to perform the work, a private tree service is hired to complete the work

The amicable working relationship among all parties, including STC, Public Works and the Division of Planning, results in a timely resolution to urgent matters. Issues such as saving a particular tree can be worked out in the design phase, rather than prior to groundbreaking.

Organizational Chart for the Management of Shade Trees



5. TRAINING PLAN

The STC members make an effort to attend as many available tree conferences and training sessions as is possible. During the term of the prior CFMP, the Continuing Education Units (CEUs) obtained by STC and Public Works exceeded what is required under the Community Forestry Council's training requirements. Last year, STC and Public Works amassed forty-one (41) CEU credits (eight (8) were required). All members are CORE trained.

In addition to attending the annual New Jersey Shade Tree Federation Conference each year, two (2) of the members and some Public Works employees recently attended the Hazard Tree ID course at Rutgers University. Three (3) members have attended "Right Tree, Right Place" training jointly offered by PSE&G and New Jersey Tree Foundation. One of the members also received CEU credit for two (2) different USDA Forest Service webinars relating to the value of reuse of urban wood from urban tree removal and the effect of trees on learning.

Specific training needs for the City include, continuing tree condition and hazard assessment training, general urban forestry training, including legal issues and planning, as well as planting site analysis and species selection training. Public Works staff attend the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation Conference and take some of the above mentioned classes in order to further their expertise and knowledge. In addition, the STC members are also interested in the identification of Emerald Ash Borer, strategy planning once it has been detected and how to manage the removal of the infested wood. Training is paid for with STC City budget funds that are earmarked for training and professional development.

Currently, the City does not provide its own training. It is reliant on Rutgers, the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation as well as PSE&G, New Jersey Tree Foundation and USDA Forest Service training programs to aid the City.

6. PUBLIC EDUCATION, AWARENESS AND OUTREACH

Plainfield's STC was formed in 2005 and was designated a Tree City USA in 2010. The Commission continues to make best efforts at outreach, although, as a group of volunteers with full-time jobs as well as personal commitments, time for outreach has been a challenge for the members. The group has been successful in increasing public awareness and building on relationships with City Council and Administration over the last five (5) years.

Each Arbor Day, a tree is designated as the year's specimen and/or historic tree. Over the past few years, the STC has featured Copper Beech, Cucumber Magnolia, American Holly, Bauman Horse Chestnut, and Japanese Katsura, to name a few. The Arbor Day programs that are distributed to those in attendance include information on the species spotlighted, as well as the history of the particular tree in Plainfield. Besides a recognition of a special tree, the STC also plants trees each year as part of their celebration where local students are invited to participate in the plantings and the general celebration. The annual Arbor Day celebrations have been reported in the Plaintiff II, a hyperlocal blog about everything Plainfield and in the Mayor's weekly newsletter to citizens.

In 2015, the STC observed the holiday at the historic Drake House Museum where funds from PSE&G were used to restore a historically sensitive garden at the museum. The landscape designer, Beth P. Riley, blended historically appropriate plant material with real-world public garden practicality. Students from two (2) local schools, the Mayor, Administration Members and the Plainfield High School Air Force ROTC all were in attendance for the annual Arbor Day event.

In 2016, STC hosted Arbor Day at the Plainfield Veterans Memorial, on the grounds of City Hall, a site where over the last few years, storms have damaged trees. This event also served as an opportunity to beautify this important memorial and the City Hall grounds. Fourteen (14) ornamental trees and two (2) Serbian Spruce were planted in the area around the monument. The specimen tree that was featured is an American Holly, estimated to be eighty (80) years old. The tree is located in a residential neighborhood, in a small lawn area between two (2) driveways. Pictures of this beautiful tree can be seen below.



The Mayor during the Arbor Day program 2016



The American Holly tree that was showcased for Arbor Day 2016

The STC participated in the annual Plainfield Health and Environmental Fair. Members distributed flyers, brochures and literature on the planting techniques, care and maintenance of trees and other plant related

materials. Residents had the opportunity to ask questions about shade trees as well.

Information regarding the STC was added to the City website at <http://plainfieldnj.gov> in 2014. A brief overview of the STC mission, meeting minutes and activity programs and notices are posted on the site. The STC would like to provide more information for the residents via the website and the City's email blast, such as information on tree health issues (Emerald Ash Borer, Sudden Oak Death, drought, etc.), gardening practices, featured tree species and other tree related subjects, to further stimulate enthusiasm and support for the tree resource.

7. STATEMENT OF TREE BUDGET

Plainfield City's ordinance limits the STC's budget to \$20,000 per year. This cap on the budget amount in the ordinance should be increased as the STC has recently been receiving budget amounts and grant funding exceeding that amount. The City has participated in the Greening of Union County tree grant program for a number of years and that has affected the budget, as 50% of the amount spent on trees is rebated the following year. Funds are then available for additional tree planting and maintenance. Training for members and membership dues to organizations such as Arbor Day Foundation, New Jersey Shade Tree Federation and Tree City USA are also paid for with the STC's budget.

The plan implementation section of this 5-Year Plan will be important in projecting the amount of money needed for upcoming programs each year. With the growing public interest and the increasing involvement in the community, the STC should estimate a figure to request each fiscal year on an as needed basis. At present, the Planning Director, STC Liaison and STC Chairperson prepare a budget. The Planning Division submits the budget to the City's Department of Administration and Finance. The budget package is then placed on the agenda at a City Council meeting for comment and eventual adoption. STC plans to have discussions with the Administration and Corporation Counsel regarding changing the ordinance language to allow for an updated budget amount.

Public Works provides the most assistance in tree maintenance. Public Works has leaf pickup, tree removal and pruning equipment and in-house labor resources to remove hazardous trees, limbs, and storm damage debris. Public Works has a line item in its operating budget to contract work beyond their reach, such as work surrounding power lines and/or where bucket truck assistance is required.

Below is an itemized budget for 2015 that includes the STC's budget along with Public Works and member volunteer time.

<u>Budget Category</u>	<u>Amount</u>
DPW Shade Tree Bureau	\$153,736.53
Leaf pickup, tree removal and pruning, equipment maintenance	
City Council Allocation	\$32,600.00
In-Kind Staff Services	\$81,120 (\$39/hr x40hr/wk)
Provides direction for STC members, grant writing and executing,	
In-Kind Services Volunteers	\$5,998.20 (\$23.07/hr x5hrs/wk)
Attend meetings, review plans, site visits to observe tree issues, work on CFMP, Ward tree surveys, etc.	
Total	\$273,454.73

8. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The following description outlines the process by which STC intends to implement this 5-year Plan. Timelines can be reviewed and adjusted each year when the required annual assessment report is completed, as needed. At the beginning of each year, the STC should review and discuss the 5-year Plan and their accomplishments to remain on track to meet the desired goals and objectives.

A. Year One, January 2016-December 2016

Yearly On-Going Activities

Regular review of site plan applications submitted to the Planning and Zoning Boards will continue throughout the year. Members will conduct site visits as needed to the properties under review, prior to plan approval. Sensitive habitats, specimen trees and wooded areas feasible to save with reasonable measures will be identified and included in the submitted report to the Planning and Zoning Boards (Goal #2).

As needed, STC will order tree guards with money from its budget for installation by STC members and DPW to guard young trees from damage from humans and deer rutting (Goal #1, Goal #4).

Residential complaints regarding hazardous trees will be addressed throughout the year, as they arise.

Tree plantings other than for Arbor Day will be scheduled for late fall, as STC has learned that is the optimum planting time for most species in this environment.

January – March

The Annual Accomplishment Report and Tree City renewal should be submitted to the State Forest Service at this time.

Outreach – Begin planning for Arbor Day program (Goal #3). Discuss specimen tree options to feature in the Arbor Day brochure. Reach out to Public Works for possible locations to host celebration.

April – May

Outreach – Arbor Day plans should be finalized. Notify press to ensure there will be coverage during the celebration. The published article should be saved to be included in next year's Annual Accomplishment Report. Trees to be planted during the celebration will help beautify the area at City Hall around the Veterans' Memorial that lost trees during storms over the last few years (Goal #1).

Discuss ideas and plan for the Plainfield Health and Environmental Fair to take place in early fall. Order any brochures needed to be handed out to the public with information on proper pruning cuts, volcano mulching, how to plant a tree, etc. (Goal #3).

June – August

Tree Planting – The STC received notification in August that Plainfield will be one of the recipients of the Spring 2016 CSIP #11 Planting grants for reforestation in the amount of \$27,900. The grant application requested money to plant 96 new trees in Ward 4 (Goal #1). Currently, redevelopment is taking place in Ward 4 and the STC plans to fill in open gaps within the rights-of-way where these projects are already underway. Work on the grant will begin in accordance with the grant language, with planting to be scheduled for late fall.

Safe ROWs – Public Works is usually able to provide for a few employees to address hazardous tree concerns during this time period (Goal #1 and #4). Review with Public Works high priority areas to be addressed.

Outreach – Finalize plans for the Health and Environmental Fair (Goal #3).

Planting Surveys- continue observations of neighborhoods in the four (4) Wards for planting sites for Greening of Union County trees that will be planted in late fall; complete surveys by end of June. (Goal #1)

September – December

Grants – If CSIP grants become available, the City should consider applying for funding to continue with additional tree plantings that the previous grant allowance was not able to fulfill (Goal #1).

The planting project in Ward 4, funded by the Spring 2016 CSIP #11 Planting Grant, may be underway by this time, provided that the final grant documents and money have been received. The work will proceed in accordance with the schedule included in the grant award. (Goal #1). Members should review tree installation process and ensure the contractor follows the guidelines and requirements of the state Forest Service. Paperwork should be completed and submitted to the state for reimbursement as provided in the Grant.

Education – Select STC members should attend the Annual Shade Tree Federation meeting held at the end of October to obtain the required CEU credits (Goal #5).

Outreach – STC should prepare a public notice regarding the Fall planting in each of the Wards as the result of Greening of Union County, planting of trees as the result of the roadway improvement project in the Brisbane Estates neighborhood, and planting of trees in Ward 4 with the spring 2016 CSIP #11 Planting Grant (Goal #3). Information on tree care and species installed should be included for interested residents.

B. Year Two, January 2017 to December 2017

Yearly On-Going Activities

Regular review of site plan applications submitted to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment will continue throughout the year. STC members conduct site visits to properties under review prior to plan approval, if needed (Goal #5). Any other tree related complaints will also be reviewed and reported.

Public Works will continue removing hazardous trees as needed from reported residential complaints and through the STC's identification of 'high visibility areas' and/or 'high traffic zones'. (Goal #4)

As needed, STC will order tree guards with money from its budget for installation by STC members and DPW to guard young trees from damage from humans and deer rutting. (Goal #1 and Goal #4)

Tree plantings other than for Arbor Day will be scheduled for late fall, as STC has learned that is the optimum planting time for most species in this environment.

January – March

Draft and submit the Annual Accomplishment Report and Tree City USA renewal. Copies should be forwarded onto the Mayor and City Council to keep them up to date on the accomplishments of the STC.

Grants – Notification should be received, if the STC applied for grant funding for the fall 2016 CSIP grant. If a grant is awarded, members should work with the liaison to draft a request for quote to contract with a contractor for a late fall planting project (Goal #1). A contractor should be secured during this time frame, while winter work is slow.

Outreach – During the winter months, members can focus on updating the STC website and the links to make the site more user friendly (Goal #3). Currently, it is difficult to navigate from the City Home page to the STC portion of the website.

Arbor Day discussions should begin again to determine a program outline for this year (Goal #3). The STC should discuss possible locations to host the event and contact local schools to extend an invitation.

Education – If any webinars or classes of interest are available, members should sign up to gain CEU credits (Goal #5). Any pertinent classes should be forwarded onto Public Works.

April – May

Grants – In the event that STC applied for and received a fall 2016 CSIP Grant, installation of trees could be underway (Goal #1). Members from the STC should meet with the contractor to review tree planting guidelines prior to install, which would occur in late fall.

Outreach - Draft an informational article to notify the public if the grant was awarded and provide key features of the tree species to be installed (Goal #3).

Discussions and preparations should begin regarding the Plainfield Health and Environmental Fair (Goal #3). If any additional copies of brochures and other handouts are needed, these should be arranged for at this time.

Finalize Arbor Day plans (Goal #3). Create pamphlet with information on the featured tree and general key highlights of the species.

Education – During the spring, tree climbing and tree worker safety courses are offered (Goal #5). Public works might look into any applicable classes for their workers.

June – August

Outreach – Submit articles to local blogs and the STC website of completed planting projects throughout the City and the recent Arbor Day celebration (Goal #3).

Planting Surveys – Provided that Greening of Union County is available, continue observations of neighborhoods in the four (4) Wards for planting sites for Greening of Union County trees that will be planted in late fall; complete surveys by end of June. (Goal #1)

Inventory- Continue street tree observations of the four (4) Wards by volunteers (Goal #4). Members should review progress of inventory and hazard tree abatement to determine if an arborist firm would be a more efficient use of time if grant funding can be obtained to cover the costs.

September – December

Education – Select STC members attend the Annual Shade Tree Federation meeting (Goal #5). All CEU credits needed for the year may be obtained at the conference.

Grants – The State Forest Service might have grants available at this time. If so, the STC should consider applying for a grant to perform a tree inventory by a Certified Tree Expert (Goal #4). This would allow a much greater area of the City to be assessed for hazard removals and pruning.

Trees installed last fall from the spring 2016 CSIP grant should be evaluated and a list of replacement trees should be generated for the contractor to replace under warranty.

Outreach – Attend the annual Plainfield Health and Environmental Fair (Goal #3). This is an opportunity to let the public know of the various planting projects the STC has completed as well as playing a part in keeping the urban forest healthy. Members might consider creating a poster storyboard of their efforts to improve this important resource of Plainfield.

Submit informational articles relating to the fall and winter season (Goal #3). Topics can include fall bulb planting, preparing landscape beds for the winter season, and any updated information on the Emerald Ash Borer.

C. Year Three, January 2018– December 2018

Yearly On-Going Activities

Regular reviews of the site plan applications submitted to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment will continue throughout the year. Properties under review will be visited as needed (Goal #2). Any reported hazard tree complaints will also be visited and Public Works will be advised, if necessary.

Members should also continue to look for signs of Emerald Ash Borers (EAB). Declining ash trees and sprouting at the trunk should warrant a visual close up inspection. The earlier the infestation is detected, the more time is will allow the City to enact an action plan. The STC should be aware of the main locations of ash trees within the City's right-of-ways and park properties. The Public Works, the STC and the Planning Division should coordinate a meeting to review what EAB looks like, where it is anticipated to be found in the City and if removals of ash trees should begin with the expectation of it arriving soon to these areas.(Goal #4)

Continue corrective pruning and hazard tree removal by Public Works to ensure safe right-of-ways. (Goal #4)

As needed, STC will order tree guards with money from its budget for installation by STC members and Public Works to guard young trees from damage from humans and deer rutting. (Goal #1, Goal #4)

Tree plantings other than for Arbor Day will be scheduled for late fall, as STC has learned that is the optimum planting time for most species in this environment.

January – March

Draft and submit the Annual Accomplishment Report and Tree City USA renewal. Copies should be forwarded onto the Mayor and City Council to keep them up to date on the accomplishments of the STC.

Grants – Grant notification should be received at this time. If the grant has been awarded to the City, a contractor should be secured to perform the survey work (Goal #4). The winter season is a good time for a tree survey as the canopy of the trees often hides problems in the summer season.

Outreach – Begin planning for the annual Arbor Day celebration (Goal #3). In previous years, the state has tree saplings available for a nominal fee. The STC might consider purchasing these trees to have participants bring home to plant in their own yards.

The STC should submit an article to the various online outlets as spring approaches and residents begin outside yard work. Items to consider discussing might include proper mulching, planting trees at the correct depth, or information on a common insect pest, such as aphids or bagworms and EAB (Goal #3).

Education – Any classes/conferences offered for CEUs should be considered for some of the members to attend, if available (Goal #5).

Policy – If the tree removal ordinance has not been changed by this time, this should be reviewed by the STC (Goal #2). The ordinance is currently placed in the Municipal Code under Chapter 3, Agencies, Boards and Commissions, cross referencing it to Chapter 13, Streets and Sidewalks. There are contradictory provisions in Chapter 15, Trees and Vegetation. A solution would be to update and/or combine both sections and to place the ordinance in Chapter 17 as part of the Land Use section, which also includes tree related sections for development. Members should discuss ordinance requirements such as tree removal permits, replacement calculations, and fines. Another topic that might be of interest is the requirement of providing structural soils or a modular suspended pavement system to provide soil volumes that will allow trees to grow to their full potential when installed in parking lot islands and sidewalk openings.

April – May

Outreach –Arbor Day planning should be finalized (Goal #3).

Grants – Any trees planted from the fall 2016 CSIP grant should be evaluated and any required replacements be installed (Goal #1). Any outstanding required grant paperwork can be finalized and sent into the State for City reimbursement.

June – August

Outreach – Finalize plans for the Plainfield Health and Environmental Fair (Goal #3). Members also might want to provide tree seedlings to continue to promote planting and stewardship.

Planting Surveys – Provided that Greening of Union County is available, continue observations of neighborhoods in the four (4) Wards for planting sites for Greening of Union County trees that will be planted in late fall; complete surveys by end of June (Goal #1).

Grants – The inventory project should be completed and paperwork should be submitted to the State Forest Service for reimbursement (Goal #4). STC members should review the findings with the arborist and Public Works. Trees tagged as high priority should be addressed by Public Works now and through the summer.

September – December

Education – The Annual Shade Tree Federation meeting should be discussed to determine which members will attend to obtain the required CEU credits. Public Works workers should also register.

Grants – Grants from the State Forest Service might be available at this time. The STC should discuss potential uses for the grant. Funding to hire a NJ certified tree expert service to perform work outlined in the recently completed survey might be considered (Goal #1). A tree service could focus on trees that are beyond the expertise of the department as well as preventative and corrective pruning for the more recently installed street trees. Young trees properly pruned is essential for developing a good quality tree. By taking measures early on, the STC can reduce drastic pruning cuts, avoid injuries and potential decay to the tree while ensuring the City's streets are lined with high quality trees.

Policy – Continue discussions regarding changes to the ordinance (Goal #2). Provide a draft document to be reviewed by Corporation Counsel. Solicit a City Council member to sponsor the ordinance change.

Outreach – STC members should attend the Health and Environmental Fair to answer residents' questions on tree related topics and provide education brochures on tree care (Goal #3).

D. Year Four, January 2019 – December 2019

Yearly On-Going Activities

Regular reviews of the site plan applications submitted to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment will continue throughout the year. Site visits to properties under review as well as residential complaints will be on going by STC members (Goal #2).

Continue to be vigilant for signs of Emerald Ash Borer (Goal #4).

As needed, STC will order tree guards with money from its budget for installation by STC members and DPW to guard young trees from damage from humans and deer rutting (Goal #1 and Goal #4).

Tree plantings other than for Arbor Day will be scheduled for late fall, as STC has learned that is the optimum planting time for most species in this environment.

January – March

Apply for Tree City USA renewal and submit the Annual Accomplishment Report to the State Forest Service.

Grants – If funding was received from the state, a contractor should be secured. (Goal #1). Pruning trees for crossing/rubbing branches and developing a strong structure and desirable form on young trees will be easier performed without leaves.

Outreach – Discuss the upcoming Arbor Day program (Goal #3). Contact school/community groups to invite children for the celebration.

Previously, in June 2014, the STC sponsored a community lecture at the Public Library on the care and planting of young trees (Goal #3 & #5). The members might want to revisit this idea, whether it is the same topic or a new one is selected. At this time, many additional trees have been planted since the last lecture, five (5) years ago.

Policy – Finalize the updated STC Ordinance (Goal #2). Once the ordinance has been adopted, the STC should advertise the changes in the local blogs and the City's website (Goal #3). STC members might also

reach out to local tree services to make them aware of any changes that might affect them.

April – May

Outreach – Finalize Arbor Day plans (Goal #3). Advertise the event in the local blogs and City website.

Grants – The contractor should be completed with all pruning work the grant funding covered (Goal #1). Finalize paperwork and submit to the State Forest Service to close out the job.

June – August

Outreach - Finalize plans for the Health and Environmental Fair.

Planting Surveys – Provided that Greening of Union County is available, continue observations of neighborhoods in the four (4) Wards for planting sites for Greening of Union County trees that will be planted in late fall; complete surveys by end of June (Goal #1).

September – December

Education – Attend the Annual Shade Tree Federation meeting.

Outreach – Attend the annual Health and Environmental Fair.

Grants – Contact the Community Forestry Program if grants are available. The STC should discuss funding needs for the City. Members should determine if additional monies should be allocated to planting or if more focus should be on tree removal and pruning work, especially if EAB is present in Plainfield.

If funding is available for drafting a fourth 5-year Plan, the City should apply for the Green Communities Grant to defray the cost of writing the next 5-year Plan. The STC Chairperson and Planning Division Liaison can begin the application process to obtain monies for plan preparation.

E. Year Five, January 2020 – December 2020

Yearly On-Going Activities

Regular reviews of the site plan applications submitted to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment will continue throughout the year. STC members will continue to perform site visits as needed.

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) invasion should continue to be monitored and actions should be taken as needed. (Goal #4)

As needed, STC will order tree guards with money from its budget for installation by STC members and Public Works to guard young trees from damage from humans and deer rutting. (Goal #1 and Goal #4)

Tree plantings other than for Arbor Day will be scheduled for late fall, as STC has learned that is the optimum planting time for most species in this environment.

January – March

Reapply for Tree City USA and submit Annual Accomplishment Report to the State Forest Service.

Outreach – The STC should submit an informative article to be posted on the City website and/or local blogs regarding the commitment and dedication involved to reach the goals and accomplishments that have been made during this timeframe (Goal #3).

Begin planning activities for Arbor Day (Goal #3).

Grant – Notification should be received if the City was awarded grant money for tree planting or hazard removals as well as the Green Communities Grant for preparation of the next 5-year Plan. The City should pass a resolution to accept the two grants.

CFMP – Plans for the next 5-year Plan should begin. A CTE should meet with members to determine new ideas and goals for the next management plan. Any comments or suggestions should be offered to ensure that changes can be made in time to submit the plan to the City, as well as to the State for final approval.

April – May

Outreach – Finalize Arbor Day plans and submit an article to the City website (Goal #3).

Discuss new ideas and possible new activities for the Health and Environmental Fair.

Grants – The contracted firm should be underway with tree plantings or hazard removals from the grant funded project (Goal #1/#4).

Education – If available, Public Works can attend the tree climbing course for worker safety (Goal #5).

June – August

CFMP – Continue discussions regarding the next 5-Year Plan.

Planting Surveys – Provided that Greening of Union County is available, continue observations of neighborhoods in the four (4) Wards for planting sites for Greening of Union County trees that will be planted in late fall; complete surveys by end of June (Goal #1).

September – December

CFMP – Plainfield's 4th 5-year Plan should be submitted to the State Forest Service for approval.

Grants – The STC should apply for the next available grant.

9. COMMUNITY FORESTRY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (CSIP)

The following is a summary of how each of the fifteen (15) Community Stewardship Incentive Practices (CSIP) is addressed in this 5-Year Plan.

CSIP #1: Training

CORE Training by the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation.

CEU units will be obtained through the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation, through Rutgers University, through training jointly offered by the New Jersey Tree Federation and utilities such as PSE&G, through USDA Forest Service webinars offered online, and through other sources that Commissioners may learn about.

CSIP #2: Community Forestry Ordinance Establishment

Shade Tree Ordinance adopted in 2006.

Amend current Ordinance to modernize it, rationalize it with the existing Trees and Vegetation ordinance and move tree related ordinances to Land Use Section of Municipal Code.

CSIP #3: Public Education and Awareness

Advertise Arbor Day and other activities on City Website.

Keep local bloggers informed of public events.

Issue press releases about successes and post on website.

CSIP #4: Arbor Day

Celebrate at different locations around the City.

Involve as many school children as possible.

Give advance notice to citizenry to encourage participation.

CSIP #5: Tree Inventory

Continue surveys of Wards by STC Commissioners and add new trees planted as the result of road construction, Greening of Union County and other grants received to the list of 1200 trees currently maintained on Excel. Explore grant money that would allow a professional inventory by a CTE.

CSIP #6: Hazard Tree Assessment

Continue to educate Public Works staff to recognize potential hazards and record them.

Continue STC Commissioner surveys of each of the four (4) Wards in the City for maintenance items and potential hazards, communicate to Public Works.

CSIP #7: Storm Damage Assessment

Follow procedures for identifying and reporting hazards to Public Works, use STC budget money for private contractors if necessary.

CSIP #8: Tree Maintenance and Removal

STC Commissioners will continue to survey each of the four (4) Wards in the City for tree maintenance items and will report them to Public Works. From time to time, STC budget money will be used to hire private contractors to do maintenance in high traffic areas.

Select the "Right Tree for the Right Place" and species that are successful in urban planting areas.

CSIP #9: Insect and Disease Management

STC Commissioners and Public Works will keep up with insect and disease trends through CEU.

Ash trees have been discontinued as a species due to Emerald Ash borer. Only disease resistant Elms are planted.

CSIP#10: Wildfires

This CSIP is not applicable to Plainfield City.

CSIP #11: Tree Planting

Tree planting will continue to be a priority.

Spring 2016 CSIP #11 Planting Grant was awarded to Plainfield in August 2016 to plant 96 trees in Ward 4.

STC will continue to take part in Greening of Union County so long as the program exists. One hundred twenty trees will be planted in late fall 2016 due to that program.

Two hundred six trees will be planted in the Brisbane Estates neighborhood as the result of a road improvement project in 2016.

Plantings will be sensitive to correct species for location, utilities, sidewalk maintenance, and disease trends.

CSIP #12: Tree Recycling

Tree recycling is currently limited to turning tree waste into mulch. Plainfield is only 6+ square miles and is fully developed. Tree waste is limited to pruning, leaf and branch clean-up and removed end of life or damaged trees.

CSIP#13: Sidewalk Maintenance

STC review of plans submitted to Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment will help to make sure that plantings comply with City streetscape plans, including cutouts for trees.

CSIP #14: Stormwater Management

Leaf cleanup is done by Public Works several times a year, which helps to keep stormwater basins clear and flowing.

CSIP #15: Other

Plainfield has an aging infrastructure and limited funds and personnel. Nonetheless, Plainfield has a dedicated volunteer STC that stays trained, spends countless hours surveying the City, works with Planning Division and Public Works and is devoted to Plainfield's Urban Forest.