

# Five Year Plan for Georgia’s Urban & Community Forest 2013- 2017

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## Introduction

The purpose of the five year plan for Georgia’s Urban and Community Forest community is to provide strategic direction to urban and community forest programs and to coordinate statewide efforts to value, conserve, manage and enhance Georgia’s community forests. The planning committee was convened by the Georgia Forestry Commission in partnership with the Georgia Urban Forest Council.

Strategic planning meetings were held at Trees Atlanta headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, on September 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Outcomes of the planning process and meetings are presented in this report.

**Purpose** – The purpose of the Five Year Plan is to provide direction for Georgia’s urban and community forestry programs and policy development and to coordinate statewide efforts to conserve and enhance Georgia’s forests.

**Vision** – It is the vision of the members of the strategic planning committee for the Five Year Plan that all communities throughout Georgia will value, conserve, manage and enhance their community forests.

Three national priorities and strategic objectives as identified in the *Georgia Statewide Assessment of Forest Resources 2010 (Forest Action Plan)* that the five year plan addresses are:

1. Conserve working forest landscapes
2. Protect forests from harm
3. Enhance public benefits from trees and forests.

Regional U& CF Program Goals provided by the US Forest Service are:

- Conduct larger statewide significant projects.
- Address urban forestry issues and opportunities in major metropolitan areas.
- Implement goals and objectives outlined in state forest action plans.
- Focused on developing their communities’ capacity to manage the urban forest.
- Tree planting (site specific) demonstration projects are allowable.

## Goals and Objectives of the Strategic Plan

The following charts present the four strategic goals and their corresponding objectives, indicators, activities, timeline and responsible parties, as developed by participants in the two-day planning retreat mentioned above. (Version date: September 18, 2012)

### STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Promote tree canopy and longevity at the landscape scale through the green infrastructure approach

	Objective	Indicator	Activity	Time frame	Responsible Party
1	Develop green infrastructure policy and design criteria for model urban forest	# publications and Power Point presentations developed/distributed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Research policy and design criteria</li> <li>2. Produce publications and Power Point presentations</li> <li>3. Promote and distribute in public information campaign</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. By 2014</li> <li>2. By 2015</li> <li>3. By 2016</li> </ol>	GFC, GUFC, ASLA, APA, GGIA, Georgia Urban Ag Council, Trees Atlanta
2	Conduct 6 regional canopy studies	# of completed studies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct document review and develop study design/scope</li> <li>2. Research and writing</li> <li>3. Identify critical areas</li> <li>4. Publish study</li> </ol>	1 study per year	GFC, USFS, Trees Atlanta, local agencies
3	Increase capacity of	# critical areas planted	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plant trees in</li> </ol>	On-going	GUFC, USFS,

	local governments to increase canopy in critical areas	# critical areas conserved	critical areas 2. Provide technical assistance		KAB, tree groups, GFC, local agencies
4	Promote the use of pervious surfaces	# of promotional activities conducted  # of publications available	1. Carry out promotional events and trainings of members of regulating jurisdictions 2. Identify and make available research publications via the web	1. On-going 2. By 2014	GUFC, GMA, APA, American Society of Civil Engineers, ASLA

**STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Increase active participation of local communities to advocate for community forests through education and tree plantings**

	Objective	Indicator	Activity	Time frame	Responsible Party
1	Update the urban forest communication plan highlighting benefits and values of community forests	Plan updated and ready	1. Develop list of 10 benefits and values 2. Look at benefit/value statements w/in plans and integrate new national data 3. Use academic partners and gather data 4. Create annual action plan	Complete all by end of 1 <sup>st</sup> year	GFC
2	Develop a 5 year plan for annual Arbor Day celebrations, etc.	# Arbor Days celebrated  # of trees planted	1. Form steering committee 2. Set themes based on benefits and values messages 3. Identify locations for statewide event (ensure regional coverage) 4. Implement plan activities	1 <sup>st</sup> 6 months, then every year	GFC, GUFC, and partners
3	Reach 100% of urban legislators	% of urban legislators in	1. Design media strategy 2. Roll out report	1 <sup>st</sup> 6 months	Pro bono media help, GUFC,

	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
	with the “State of the Urban Forest” report	each district reached	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Participate in or host legislative events</li> <li>4. Include presentation of Vibrant Cities, Tree Campus and Tree City USA programs</li> </ol>	then on-going	GFA, local advocacy groups
4	Broaden the reach of Georgia Relief Arbor Jam	<p># pilot events held</p> <p># of trees planted</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partner with nature centers, parks, etc. for potential fundraiser/education</li> <li>2. Coordinate media plan with GUFC board of directors</li> </ol>	By 2014	GUFC, OAC, Chattahoochee Nature Center
5	Expand “Children’s Forest Network” and other partnerships such as Tree Campus USA by 8-10 partner locations and 80 – 100 volunteers	<p># of partner locations and volunteers and</p> <p># of trees planted</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify potential partners</li> <li>2. Survey partners for common interests (educational events)</li> <li>3. Develop common educational materials</li> <li>4. Make presentations on “Making the Shade”</li> <li>5. Tree Campus USA schools volunteer for service projects</li> </ol>	<p>2013</p> <p>2014</p>	USFS, WAWA, OAC, NWF, colleges and universities
6	Reach out to community gardens and urban farm programs to better coordinate efforts and mobilize their constituents on tree preservation	<p>1 demo garden up and running</p> <p>Integrated educational and advocacy effort underway involving “foodies”</p> <p># of trees planted or conserved with gardens</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop case study or demonstration plot of “gardening in the forest”</li> <li>2. Integrate educational programs with Master Gardener and Master Naturalist programs, The Georgia Grove and Vibrant Cities</li> <li>3. Identify target audience in food networks for advocacy work</li> </ol>	<p>2014</p> <p>2014</p>	New partner organizations, Georgia Organics, Extension Service, Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources at UGA

### STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Promote the development and enforcement of local tree ordinances

	Objective	Indicator	Activity	Time frame	Responsible Party
1	Assist 25 local communities per year to develop their own effective tree ordinances that connect to land use planning and transportation	# of communities that report establishing or updating tree ordinances with priority criteria	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meet with representatives of local tree boards, elected bodies, mayors, and others involved with writing the ordinances</li> <li>2. Review current tree ordinance manual/guidebook</li> <li>3. Modify and update current tree ordinance guidebook</li> </ol>	annual	GFC GUFC
2	Provide self-survey tool to 25 local communities per year for evaluating current ordinances	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. # of communities that complete the survey</li> <li>2. # of government agencies requesting or reporting survey</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop survey with checklist</li> <li>2. Review survey (to include protection goal, enforcement clauses, training, penalties, suggestions for staffing, landscaping design, BMPs and offer of ordinance review with review panel)</li> <li>3. Encourage tree boards to update their ordinances</li> </ol>	By January 2014	GFC GUFC
3	Increase by 25% the use by citizens, developers and local officials of websites and databases that provide valuation of urban trees and advice on conserving trees	% increase use of Green Cities, Good Health, the Grove and treelink.org websites, Unicode website	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Email blast to communities with links to the websites</li> <li>2. Link to Facebook and Twitter</li> </ol>	Quarterly	GUFC GFC

## STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Promote sustainable community forestry by training professionals to implement best management practices

Metric 1: Increase certified arborists

Metric 2: Increase number of other professionals trained in urban forestry

Metric 3: Increase use of BMPs

	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
1	Partner with other agencies to offer online/webinar trainings	1 session per year	1. Offer one online arborist class 2. Hold joint meetings with partner groups to plan	End of 2013	GUFC, UGA, Technical Colleges, GAA
2	Develop capacity among Spanish language population in BMP materials	75% increase in pretest/post test scores for training participants after take training	1. Research/gather info 2. Conduct needs assessment 3. Develop training materials	Achieved by 2016	GUFC Board, GUFC, GAA, GGIA, GPRA, GALEO, ISA (have BMPs in Spanish)
3	Provide four cutting edge trainings to urban forest professionals	# trainings provided	Offer trainings at GUFC quarterly & annual meetings	Annually	GUFC, GAA
4	Build GUFC Capacity by increasing networking with at least one new partner group per year	# new or expanded partnerships per year	GUFC board identify partner group per year to focus on – attend their meetings, invite them to ours, regular sharing of information	Partnership established or expanded by end of each year	GUFC Board and member partner groups, National Environmental Justice Network's GA affiliate based in Savannah, GGIA

### Abbreviations

GFC	Georgia Forestry Commission
GUFC	Georgia Urban Forest Council
ASLA	American Society of Landscape Architects
APA	American Planning Association
GGIA	Georgia Green Industry Association
USFS	US Forest Service
KAB	Keep America Beautiful
GMA	Georgia Municipal Association
GFA	Georgia Forestry Association
OAC	Outdoor Activity Center

WAWA	West Atlanta Watershed Alliance
NWF	National Wildlife Federation
UGA	University of Georgia
GAA	Georgia Arborist Association
GRPA	Georgia Recreation and Park Association
GALEO	Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials
ISA	International Society of Arboriculture
BMPs	Best Management Practices

## **Strategic Planning Team**

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