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Quiet revolutions: neighborhood urban forestry programs

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QUIET REVOLUTIONS: NEIGHBORHOOD URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAMS

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements of the degree of
Master of Landscape
Architecture

In

The School of Landscape Architecture

by
Ann McCoy Allen
B.S., Louisiana State University, 1999
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DEDICATION

To my parents. Thank you for your endless sacrifices all which have this and all things possible.

Mom, thank you for you high standards. Thank you for helping me dig up the backyard to make a garden; that is what started all of this. Thank you for your constant self-sacrifice. But thank you most of all for all the tiny acts of thoughtfulness you have displayed my entire life.

Dad, thank you for you humor, intelligence, and unconditional love.

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Thank you, Bruce Sharky, for turning about six thesis topics into exactly what I wanted do (in about 60 seconds). You gave me a topic, not only that I have enjoyed working with, but that I have grown to love and believe in.

Thank you, John Harper, most of all for the plant walks (even though they have nothing to do with my thesis). Thank you also for the ideas, opinions, and edits.

Thank you Peggy Davis, you inspire me to do more good.

And finally, thank you to Chris Harwood. You kept me as sane as I could have been during these last months. I love you.

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks *to identify the key components that would enable neighborhoods to become responsible for the trees under which they dwell—their urban forest.*

Guidelines will be established for neighborhoods to use to compose a plan that allows them to create and sustain the tree population specific to their needs and desires. To develop these guidelines, this study is divided into two parts. The first section examines urban forestry. This review revealed several issues pertinent to urban forestry: (1) The urban forest is crucial to the health and beauty of the city and is directly linked to the well-being of the city's inhabitants and, (2) there are simply too many trees in a city for municipal arbor crews to provide adequate care for them all. There are however, (3) other resources available to help citizens care for their urban forests.

The second section presents case studies of three neighborhoods that have established successful urban forestry programs and projects. The case studies attempt to isolate the ideas, methods, and characteristics of urban forestry programs created and carried through at the neighborhood level. The case studies examine the neighborhood urban forestry projects of three southern neighborhoods: Boulevard Oaks in Houston, Texas; Inman Park in Atlanta, Georgia; and Central High in Little Rock, Arkansas. The case studies examine these three different neighborhoods' projects in terms of these specific components: project name, location, date created, progress to date, date completed, neighborhood description, project background, project goal, role of the project's directors, role the neighborhood residents, maintenance, and lessons learned.

As a result of the research and case study analysis, the necessary components were developed to help neighborhoods devise plans and implement urban forestry projects. The guidelines would enable interested neighborhoods to cultivate the urban forest that best meets their neighborhood needs.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

A passion for plants brought me to LSU to study horticulture. I received my bachelor's degree in horticulture and eagerly began working as a gardener at the Dallas Arboretum. As a gardener, I worked closely with plants, but I had very little input about their placement into the Arboretum's larger design. Over time, I became increasingly curious about planting design. Thus began my journey into landscape architecture.

Since becoming a student in Louisiana State University's landscape architecture program, I have learned that landscape architecture consists of much more than planting design. Landscape architecture is an amazingly broad field; there are aspects of landscape architecture that, before becoming a landscape architecture student, I did not know existed. One such aspect is the concept and practice of urban forestry.

I first heard the term *urban forestry* and went on to participate in an urban forestry tree planting project in a site planning studio my third semester of graduate school. During this project, I fell in love with the notion of city dwellers living in a vast urban forest. Before hearing the term *urban forestry* and learning more about the concept, I had never considered the fact that I had lived my entire life in a forest. The tree in my front yard is, in fact, part of an urban forest ecosystem. I was drawn to this idea, and I knew my thesis would involve some aspect of urban forestry.

Most people are familiar with the word *forestry*. Forestry has been practiced for centuries and conjures up thoughts of songbirds, streams, and pine trees planted in efficient rows to be eventually harvested for timber. Although not all people may be familiar with the term *urban forestry*, Americans have been cultivating, maintaining, and

manipulating their urban forests since the earliest Pilgrim settlers arrived. Officially, the term *urban forestry* came into common usage in the 1960s (Moll, et al.). The Society of American Foresters defines *urban forestry* as, “a branch of forestry that has as its objective the cultivation and management of trees for their present and potential contribution to the physiological, sociological, and economic well-being of urban society,” (Kuchelmeister, no date). All woody perennials and how they are embedded in and interact together with the urban ecosystem form the urban forest.

While modern forestry draws to mind a serene forest scene, urban forestry may bring to mind buildings, concrete, and the manmade world. Seventy-five percent of Americans live in metropolitan areas (McPherson, 21). The contemporary urban forest is where most Americans work and play; this is the forest they experience on a daily basis. With continued urbanization driving the development of our urban forests, we need to think of our urban trees not as amenities but as essential green infrastructure: the natural systems that make up the backbone of our cities, just as trees in the wilderness are the backbone of the natural forest.

Urban trees are planted for specific purposes such as shade, beauty, and privacy. The forest tree and the urban tree are valued in different ways. “Trees in cities are imbued with meaning; some are landmarks, others are memorials. People develop emotional attachments to trees” (McPherson, 22). I vividly remember that when I was growing up, my friend’s mother had us pose for photographs by the tree in their front yard. Later, as it was being cut down, her mother cried.

This suggests that the benefits of a lush urban forest accumulate at the individual level. Should not these individuals take responsibility for the trees and green

environment that so elevate their quality of life? To test this question, researchers in Oakland, California, asked, “Why does it take a community-based group to plant urban trees?” Why do/should we expect the Public Works Department to plant trees in an assembly line fashion and readily accept that they will live? (Ames, Richard G., 120)

Researchers have found that if residents in an urban environment do not participate in the life of trees at a grass-roots level, tree mortality is extremely high. Healthy urban forest populations most benefit their community from within; therefore, residents cannot expect “externally conceived” tree programs to have long-term survival rates. Citizens must take greater responsibility for trees in their own neighborhoods in order to increase their longevity.

Typically, city governments are responsible for urban forestry planning and maintenance. In this thesis, I would like to determine how an urban forestry program can be carried out by citizens at the neighborhood level. Due to time and budget constraints, a city’s arboriculture department cannot treat all city trees equally. Meanwhile, municipal tree budgets are decreasing. This, coupled with the fact that urban trees have a life span of only 10-25 years (Galvin, 124), requiring significant maintenance and replacement funding, makes the need for neighborhood-initiated responsibility for its own urban forest increasingly relevant.

An estimated 60-90% of urban trees grow on privately owned land (Clark, 21). Trees are unevenly distributed among small private landholdings such as residential properties, small commercial properties, neighborhood schools, and churches. On the other hand, a significant number of urban trees belong to a small number of larger private land owners such as universities, business parks, large corporate campuses, airports, etc.

(Clark, 1997). In addition to privately maintained trees, there are trees on public properties such as street and power rights of way, recreational, parks, and drainage rights of way. Whether a tree is growing on public or private land, it is part of an urban forest that benefits all who dwell there. Urban forests and the people who live in them should not be thought of separately.

1.2 Problem Statement

It is time to place the responsibility for urban forest care in the hands of willing neighborhoods. But can a neighborhood become responsible for its own urban forest? By developing a set of guidelines which enables neighborhoods to establish a partnership between the city or local urban forestry organizations, citizens can organize themselves to manage their own urban forestry projects. This thesis will attempt to establish the components necessary for neighborhood urban forestry project development and implementation. These components and the mechanisms of organization illustrated in the case studies will demonstrate how any interested neighborhood entity can carry out urban forestry projects.

1.3 Goal

I plan to identify the key phases of neighborhood urban forestry projects and their components of making such projects less daunting and within the grasp of interested neighborhoods. I will analyze efforts in which neighborhoods have identified a problem in their urban forest and organized to address it. I will examine the important role of a neighborhood in the life of its urban forest and develop a strategy to help neighborhoods undertake urban forestry projects. This thesis has the following goal:

1. To determine the essential factors that neighborhoods should consider in order to create, implement, and administer a grass-roots urban forestry project, such as

establishing a goal, fundraising, education, tree maintenance, and using available resources and technical assistance.

1.4 Methodology

To achieve these goals the thesis is divided into two parts. First in the literature review and then in the case studies I will use the following methods to achieve the previously stated goals:

1. Review existing research to determine the crucial role of a neighborhood in the life of its urban forest.
2. Through case study analysis, examine the successful urban forestry programs of three neighborhoods.

To understand the specific issues that go into neighborhood urban forestry projects, I will conduct case studies of three neighborhoods in the southern United States that have carried out successful urban forestry projects. The neighborhoods are Inman Park in Atlanta, Georgia; Boulevard Oaks in Houston, Texas; and Central High in Little Rock, Arkansas. Through the case studies I will accomplish the previously stated goals by:

1. Examining Case Studies of Neighborhood Urban Forestry Projects

Through case study analysis, I will gain insight into the many aspects of neighborhood urban forestry project development and implementation.

2. Determining the proper balance of aid from outside the neighborhood

Based on the case studies, I will recommend the proper or necessary balance of technical support, education, and communication between the residents of the neighborhood and “experts” in local government, local business, and urban forestry organizations.

3. Determining the various methods of funding

Determine means for funding of project goals by exploring the use of available grant money as well as fund raising among the residents of the neighborhood.

4. Generating the Components of Project Development

This is the heart of the thesis. Based on the case studies, I will generate a set of the necessary components and steps for residents to use and consider in order to accomplish an urban forestry project.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the literature review, I will attempt to illustrate the vital relationship between urban trees and urban dwellers. This relationship is crucial in the lives of both trees and people. Before I begin, consider two ideas expressed over one hundred years apart on the subject of the importance of urban neighborhoods and urban trees.

“If we are to speak realistically of preconditions for effective change, it must be recognized that the neighborhood—not the sprawling, anonymous metropolis—is the key.” (Rohe, 1985, p. 3).

--The National Commission on Neighborhoods,
People Building Neighborhoods

“...how many towns, how many villages, could we name where rude and uncouth streets bask in the summer heat, and revel in the noontide glare, with scarcely a leaf to shelter or break the painful monotony!...What must be done in such cases? There must be at least one right-feeling man in every such Sodom. Let him set vigorously at work, and if he cannot induce his neighbors to join him, he must not be disheartened—let him plant and cherish carefully a few trees, if only half a dozen. In a very few years...their luxuriant leafy arms, swaying and waving to and fro, will make more convincing gestures than any member of Congress or stump speaker; and if there is any love of nature dormant in the dusty hearts of the villagers, we prophesy that in a very short time there will be such a general yearning after green trees, that the whole place will become a bower of freshness and verdure” (Gerhold, 2002, p. 21).

--Andrew Jackson Downing, 1847

Trees. Neighborhoods. In the city, what is one without the other? How do they function independently of each other? Should they function independently of each other? How is each modified when they function symbiotically? Trees and neighborhoods, the two major elements of this thesis; each have a multitude of functions. Traditionally, trees have been considered major components of the natural world. Likewise, neighborhoods are major components, essentially the building blocks of cities.

It is not too difficult to recognize the role trees play in the life, character, and identity of a neighborhood. Trees have long been used to give neighborhoods a sense of vitality and sophistication. It is the role of the neighborhood in the life of the tree that seems somewhat foreign. Of course, trees improve quality of life in their neighborhoods, but can neighborhoods do the same for trees? To provide a base of knowledge for myself and a foundation for this thesis question, I first reviewed the writings and existing research in both neighborhood planning and urban forestry. In this literature review, I examine urban forestry and neighborhood planning.

2.2 Urban Forestry and Landscape Architecture

As the world changes and populations grow, landscape architects increasingly are called upon to help link people and places through planning and design. Landscape architects have long been stewards of our urban forests.

In 1841, Andrew Jackson Downing, one of this country's early landscape architects, already recognized the need to bring nature's relief into the urban environment. Downing, while advocating the creation of an "Ornamental Tree Society," discussed the necessity of designing with trees, advising cities to, "turn dusty lanes and bald highways into alleys and avenues of coolness and verdure"(Gerhold, 2002, p. 21). At about the same time, Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux worked to create a new, naturalistic urban landscape by bringing more parks, open space, and trees into the city. Their designs promoted "social progress, such as greater tolerance and appreciation of diverse peoples" (Gerhold, 2002, p. 23). These great men understood the complex

effects trees have on people.¹ They also recognized that, in urban areas, there is a symbiotic relationship between humans and trees. In the past decade, scientific research has proven just what Downing, Olmsted, and Vaux theorized; that trees do have a positive psychological effect on humans. In the years since these men lived, the technology of managing trees has developed into a science by merging the knowledge of a number of fields to create the new discipline of urban forestry (Moll, 2004, 2). By using trees in their designs and plans and by advocating the use of species appropriate for particular sites, landscape architecture has been and continues to be one of the contributing fields for over a century.

2.3 Urban Forestry: A Brief History

Trees have long been planted in towns and cities. Egyptian gardens belonging to the royal families were planted with rows of sycamores, palms, and pomegranates.² Ramses had rows of street trees planted for promenading and recreation (Gerhold, 2002, p. 7), much as the French did along the Champs Elysees in Paris in the mid-nineteenth century.

In America, the Pilgrims established woodlots or common forests to be maintained by all. The woodlot supplied material for heating, cooking, shingling, clapboarding, furnishing, fence-laying, road building, and, of course, for habitat game (www.lib.duke.edu/forest).

In the 1700s, the state of Massachusetts established a Town Tree Warden. Annual elections were held to elect the Tree Warden to provide statewide protection to

¹ I will discuss the 'complex effects' trees have on humans in the portion of this literature review titled The Benefits of Urban Trees to Biological and Social Ecosystems.

² *Plantus* species,

Massachusetts' shade trees (Gerhold, 2002, p. 46). Around the same time, Philadelphia gave legal status to its trees by creating an ordinance requiring every owner of a house to plant one or more trees "before the door that the town may be well-shaded from the violence of the sun" (Gerhold, 2002, p. 46).

At the turn of the nineteenth century, city councils began to establish public departments to care for the city's trees. Some such departments were the Trees and Parkings Commission in Washington, D.C., in 1872; the Board of Parks in Sacramento, California in 1911; the Park and Recreation Board in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1883. In New Orleans, the Parking Commission was given control of street trees in 1909 (Moll, 1989 pp. 36-37). Other states such as Michigan and California stated in legislation that specific species of trees were to be planted in particular arrangements along boulevards and city squares.

2.4 Urban Forestry Management

Today, in the United States, urban forests are managed by several different entities. Although little is known about exactly how responsibility for urban forest establishment and maintenance is actually apportioned in different cities throughout the country (Kuchelmeister, 1996), in most cities trees are cared for and managed by some combination of these groups: federal and state departments, municipal authorities, corporate industries, academic institutions, utility companies, volunteers and nonprofit groups, private landowners and homeowners, and urban residents. It varies from city to city.

While there is assured federal funding available annually for urban forestry projects and though many cities do employ an urban forester, in addition to having one or

more nonprofit groups working for the benefit of the urban forests, in most cases this is not enough. To illustrate this point, consider the role of each: the federal government, municipal governments, and nonprofit, citizen groups in the care and development of urban forests.

At the federal level, the importance of trees in urban environments was first recognized in 1978 with the creation of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act. It is the purpose of the CFAA to establish a coordinated and cooperative federal, state, and local forest stewardship program for the management of the country's forestlands. Federal dollars are given to state agencies that fund grants and provide technical assistance to interested communities. The CFAA sets eight objectives to help meet its primary purpose. These are to:

- Improve understanding of the benefits of preserving existing tree cover in urban areas and communities;
- Encourage owners of private residences and commercial properties to maintain trees and expand forest cover;
- Provide education programs and technical assistance to state and local organizations in maintaining forested lands and individual trees in urban and community settings and identifying appropriate tree species and sites for expanding forest cover;
- Provide assistance through competitive matching grants awarded to local units of government;
- Implement a tree planting program to complement urban and community tree maintenance and open space programs and to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, conserve energy, and improve air quality;
- Promote the establishment of demonstration projects in selected urban and community settings to illustrate the benefits of maintaining and creating forest cover and trees;
- Enhance the technical skills and understanding of sound tree maintenance and arboricultural practices including practices involving the cultivation of trees, shrubs and complementary ground covers, of individuals involved in the planning, development, and maintenance of urban and community forests and trees; and
- Expand existing research and educational efforts intended to improve understanding of (A) tree growth and maintenance, tree physiology and

morphology, species adaptations, and forest ecology, (B) the value of integrating trees and groundcovers, (C) the economic, environmental, social, and psychological benefits of trees and forest cover in urban and community environments, and (D) the role of urban trees in conserving energy and mitigating the urban heat island. All of these tasks, to be accomplished on the national level, were given annual funding of just \$3.5 million until 1984, when the program was cut down to just \$1.5 million.

Improvements in urban forestry federal funding were made with the creation of the Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) program, which came about as part of the 1990 Farm Bill. The 1990 Farm Bill amended the CFAA to provide a minimum level of funding of \$30 million per year. The funding has increased each year, going from \$26 million in 1998 to \$36 million in 2002. While \$30 million can make some of these priorities possible, it cannot begin to accomplish all of them nationwide. The 1990 Farm Bill increased funding and delivered technical and financial assistance to communities. Since 1990, state agencies have made significant improvements in technical standards, hired trained arborists within local governments, and created urban forest management plans and tree ordinances for cities (Walker). The U&CF program, which functions under the U.S. Forest Service, provides technical and financial assistance to communities through state forestry agencies. The state forestry agencies can then give money to state and local government and/or nonprofit citizen groups, as it becomes available. However, in some states, urban forestry programs are wholly dependent on federal funding, which limits their ability to provide assistance at the local level.

There is great diversity in how city governments care for their urban forests. They range from cities with detailed and highly technological tree care management plans to cities that hardly acknowledge the existence of an urban forest. In his essay *City*

Tree Care Programs: A Status Report, J. James Kielbaso describes the conditions of trees in the ideal city:

All available planting sites are occupied by healthy, well-chosen trees, which line streets and grace public properties. These trees live longer than trees in other cities in the region, and every tree removed is replaced within a year. The exact location and condition of each tree are known and monitored regularly. No decayed or weakened trees, which could be safety hazards, are on the public ways, and no trees obstruct vehicular or pedestrian traffic. By plan and not simply accident, trees and utilities do not compete for space.

There is no summer heat island in the city; as matter of fact, the city seems quite comfortable compared with several years ago. Maintenance is regular and careful. Each tree in the city is pruned every four years to remove any weak, obstructing, or otherwise undesirable branches. Trees are carefully selected for the characteristics of the soil at the planting; no trees suffer from nutrient deficiencies caused by extreme soil reaction. Few pest problems occur, and they are quickly controlled because integrated pest management utilizes effective scouting to identify any problem before it becomes serious (Moll, 1989, p 35).

Although in most cities ideal conditions are extremely rare, there are cities that have long known the value of urban forests and their contributions to the physical, economic, and social health of their residents. Minneapolis, Minnesota, is a city with a long history of urban tree care. In 1888, Minneapolis had the foresight to pass an ordinance regulating the planting and preservation of shade trees which stipulated that the cost of planting should be assessed together with the costs of three years' subsequent care (Tucker, p. 29). Minneapolis currently has one of the premier urban forestry programs in the country (Tucker, p. 30). The forestry division of the Parks and Recreation Board has the responsibility for 160,000 street trees plus trees in parks, boulevards, and golf courses. In 1990, they had a budget of \$6 million and a staff of 104. The main strategy of the urban forestry department is the tree inventory and planting master plan in which all vacant spaces are identified and matched with a suitable species.

Since 1977, the city's urban forestry department has planted over 140,000 trees. At planting time, much attention is given to soil and site preparation. Each tree is given the largest possible growing space, and site preparation includes rototilling, mulching, and tree wraps (to prevent sun scorch and frost damage). Long-term maintenance includes frequent watering and formative pruning. In his essay about Minneapolis' urban forestry program, J.C. Tucker writes, "The attention given to formative pruning is particularly impressive. The city is divided into five districts, each of which has its own maintenance crew. Each crew is responsible for pruning every new tree in its district annually for the first three years and thereafter on a four to five year rotation." This produces a well-formed tree that is adapted to its particular site and reduces the need for more expensive pruning of larger limbs later on down the line.

Minneapolis also concentrates on the support of politicians and city residents, and much time and effort is given to promote public involvement and education. For example, 'Elmer the Elm' and 'Rodney Root' have been standard features of the city schools' education programs. 'Adopt a Tree' programs have been successful in encouraging the public to maintain newly planted city trees.

Minneapolis is not the only city that makes urban forestry a priority. In his essay, *Urban Forests: An Overview*, Kielbaso lists these cities as examples of U.S. cities with outstanding urban tree programs:

Austin, Texas, has an urban forester in the Forestry Unit, Operations Division of the Parks and Recreation Department. This professional knows the number of trees in the city, conducts cooperative research on live oak decline, offers extensive public education programs, and runs an innovative Christmas tree recycling program.

Cincinnati, Ohio, has an urban forester in the Forestry Section of the Engineering Division of the Public Works Department. The city has a management plan and also an unusual ordinance requiring that all wood

products of the urban forest be utilized, with revenue going back to the forestry program.

Lansing, Michigan, has a forestry manager within the Department of Parks and Recreation. Among other things, Lansing has a formal management plan and a written emergency plan; the city has removed all high-risk trees and is in the process of replacing removals; it regularly participates in research projects.

Highland Park, Illinois, has a city forester in a Division of Forestry within the Public Works Department. This city has organized a computerized inventory of its trees, has been named Tree City USA (a designation awarded to the cities by the National Arbor Day Foundation for achieving certain set standards in its urban forestry programs), uses systematic treatments for nutrient deficiencies, and has its own nursery.

Charlotte, North Carolina, has a city arborist in its Parks Operations Division of the Parks and Recreation Department who knows the number of trees by species, conducts cooperative research with the Bartlett Tree Laboratories, and also conducts an integrated pest management program.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has its forester in the Forestry Division of the Department of Public Works. This city has a street tree inventory which identifies how many trees it has and where they are, has done considerable research in cooperation with various universities, maintains a large street tree program and an extensive boulevard program, and has a large Arbor Day program in which the mayor actively participates (Moll, 1989, pp. 36-37).

These cities share a common commitment to making trees a high priority due to their understanding of the total environmental, economic, aesthetic, and social assets of trees. Further, they make this commitment legal. Each city has ordinances that assign responsibility for the planting and care of all the city's trees. Ordinances provide for adequate space for the trees' growth above and below ground. They also make it clear that trees cannot be removed by anyone until a permit has been obtained. Finally, ordinances also specify who will be responsible for the care of the city's trees, and they establish a position for a person to monitor the observance of these ordinances (Moll, 1989, p 36). Although things are slowly changing, for now, these cities are in the minority.

In reality, only 16% of U.S. cities have an urban forest management plan (Kielbaso, 1990, p. 71). This means 80-85% of U.S. cities have no plan in place for managing their urban trees; even though a tree, by its very nature, is a long-term investment. Many cities that do have tree programs are managed on a crisis basis, being purely reactionary. In the case of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Steve Shurtz, director of the Baton Rouge's Landscape and Forestry Department explains, "About the only (tree) work that actually gets done in East Baton Rouge, due to our extremely limited budget, is the removal of dead and hazardous trees, the pruning of low or obstructing limbs, and the occasional planting." In Baton Rouge, the City-Parish has 21 employees doing tree and landscape related work. These employees include a director, an assistant director, a secretary, a south maintenance crew of eight, a north maintenance crew of five, and a beautification crew of five. There is no "arboricultural unit".

2.5 Urban Forestry Funding and the Role of Citizen Involvement

Decreased funding is one of the greatest challenges facing city urban forestry management programs. In this study, average tree care in thirty-seven surveyed cities is only 0.49% of the city budget and is increasingly less than other city services. In 2003, in Baton Rouge, the City-Parish's tree budget was calculated to be 0.275% of the overall City-Parish budget. On a per capita basis of expenditure for city services, police are at \$103.22, fire at \$68.28 and refuse at \$32.41, far exceeding per capita tree care at \$2.60 (Kielbaso, 1990, 71). This same study found that when asked if they were managing their trees systematically, 56% of responding cities were affirmative in 1974, 50% in 1980, and only 39% in 1986. The author of this study theorizes that within city budgets urban forestry program funds are losing ground relative to other services (Kielbaso, 1990,

73). Clearly, urban forest managers must search for alternatives to municipal funding sources to maintain healthy urban trees which are so valuable to the urban landscape. Citizen involvement is one such resource.

Reductions in municipal budgets are causing services such as urban tree care to be cut back. This has created an opportunity for public-private partnerships in planting and maintaining trees. Nonprofit and voluntary organizations have sprung up to fill in the gaps. In order for the work of the city to be successful, it must be combined with the efforts of other urban forestry groups. In almost every city with an outstanding urban forestry program, powerful nonprofit, citizen groups are essential elements, since they provide funding, technical support, and a volunteer labor force. Tree programs involving citizen action have similar objectives. The citizens and their groups plant, prune, maintain, educate, provide technical assistance, fund raise, and advocate for tree-related issues within their cities. The process of organizing citizen action groups in support of tree planting and maintenance usually, “takes on the flavor that reflects the particular needs of a community” (Moll, 1989, p. 240). These groups may have missions and goals that vary but most reach far beyond the simple act of planting a tree. It is the objective of these groups to assist their communities, schools, and civic groups in planting and caring for trees in their cities and, in some cases, in partly funding tree costs. These groups work to make urban forestry a popular and visible issue. They form partnerships with community groups and other nonprofit groups to promote governmental assistance and to coordinate volunteer efforts. They work to educate the public by teaching the benefits of urban trees and proper species selection through presentations and workshops to homeowners, civic groups, schools, and other groups in the community. A random

sampling of groups founded by private citizens includes: (and, keep in mind, these groups and their accomplishments are a sample of what is believed to be a much larger number of organizations)

TreePeople, founded in the early 1970s by Los Angeles' resident Andy Lipkis, now has over 10,000 members. TreePeople saw an opportunity when the city drafted an Air Quality Management Plan, calling for the planting of one million trees to help comply with the air quality standards set by the 1970 Clean Air Act. The city of Los Angeles claimed that 1 million trees, when mature, could filter up to 200 tons of particulate smog from the air every day (Moll, 1989, pp. 240-241). The city estimated the undertaking would cost \$200 million and take 20 years. TreePeople worked with the public and did it in three years at no cost to the city.

Twin Cities Tree Trust was founded by two Minneapolis residents after Minneapolis was forced to cut down most of its mature boulevard trees because of the Dutch elm infestation. The group combined the need for reforestation with the city's unemployment problems to employ over 13,000 economically and disadvantaged youth to plant over 330,000 trees (Moll, 1989, p. 243). Their work is ongoing.

Friends of the Urban Forest (FUF) provides assistance to any San Francisco neighborhood group that wishes to plant a minimum of thirty trees. FUF offers financial and technical assistance.

Trees Atlanta was created to respond to the lack of trees in Atlanta's downtown. This group built a public private partnership to plant large shade trees along the sidewalks in downtown Atlanta. At present over 17,000 large shade trees have been planted in downtown and midtown Atlanta. Over 60,000 young shade trees have been planted and distributed by volunteers in Atlanta. Hundreds of trees were saved through partnerships with community groups and stronger tree protection laws.

Because city trees grow in a human environment, it can be argued that urban forests rely on humans for their well being and, in most cases, their existence. Trees should be seen as more than amenities or afterthoughts. Urban forests should be considered part of the urban infrastructure. Other forms of urban infrastructure such as buildings, streets, and overpasses are designed and managed with specific functions in mind that meet the precise needs of local people. Management of urban vegetation

should be planned to meet local needs. Unlike trees growing in an isolated forest, trees in the city have to meet people's needs and compliment the operations of the city.

Otherwise, they probably will not survive. People are a central component in the life of urban trees. Urban trees are very dependent on human assistance in their early years and during times of drought. Research has documented that survival rates are low when trees are planted in neighborhoods without resident support (Sommer, 1996, p. 43).

People play an important role in the care of urban trees; however, people are also responsible for many predicaments affecting trees' survival, such as soil compaction due to foot traffic and mechanical damage from mowers and weed eaters. Thus, it is becoming more and more obvious that attention needs to be put on the human dimensions of urban tree plantings and maintenance plans (Austin, 2002, p.178).

2.6 The Benefits of Urban Trees to Biological and Social Ecosystems

Collectively the trees in our cities are called our urban forests. Approximately 3.8 billion trees make up the United States' urban forests (Nowak, 2002, p. 196). In temperate regions of the world, 60-80% of a city's area supports enough trees to meet conventional definitions of a forest (Rowntree, 1984, p. 1). These trees go far beyond providing shade and decorating our streets and front yards. Urban trees are considered making up actual forests that function in the same way that a traditional forest would. Yes, there is much more concrete and car exhaust but that makes the presence of trees all the more crucial. Sadly, like other more natural forests, our urban forests are starting to decline and disappear (Moll, 1989, p. xv). This decline, combined with other environmental emergencies, makes it ever more important for people to see their urban forest as the purifying natural feature that it is.

In his essay *Needed: A New Vision for Our Communities*, R. Neil Sampson presents an interesting point. He argues:

At one extreme, an urban environment can be sterile and mechanistic, made up of concrete, stone, iron, and copper—square buildings, each a lot like the ones on either side, connected by a complex system of pipes, wires, tunnels, sidewalks, and streets. Put a dome over the top and introduce artificial heating, cooling, and light, and you have a space city that has long captured the imagination of science fiction writers. But when that same city is softened and buffered by trees, parks, boulevards, flower beds, curved walkways, and shady river banks, it becomes something entirely different. The term *habitat* comes to mind. This is a place where people—and plants, birds, and animals—live. This is home. (Moll, 1989 p. 4).

As a people, we are still searching for the equilibrium between manmade systems and the natural environment. According to Alfredo Lorenzo³, trees are argued to be the most important form of vegetation in urban areas (Lorenzo, 2000, p.319). Coupled with the fact that individuals and small groups can make a significant difference in urban forest health, urban forests appear to be one of the easiest means of reaching this equilibrium.

Before I enumerate some of the reasons research tells us urban trees are important, I would like readers to keep the following in mind. Increasingly, people are concentrated in urban areas around the world. Urban populations are growing two and a half times faster than rural populations. Today, almost 50 percent of the world's population live in urban areas, and by the year 2025, more than two-thirds will inhabit cities (MacDonald, 1996, p.27). These statistics project global numbers, but the answers to these problems can begin to be solved at the local level. A one-size-fits-all plan will not work. What works in Baton Rouge will not necessarily work in Dallas.

³ Alfredo B. Lorenzo is an associate professor of Urban Forestry at Southern University.

Based on tree valuation methods of the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers, the values of trees in U.S. cities range from a high of \$101 billion in Jersey City, New Jersey, to \$5.2 billion in New York, New York. The total value of the trees in the 48 contiguous United States is estimated at \$2.4 trillion (Nowak, 2002, p. 194). Average value per urban tree ranged from a low of \$394 in Atlanta, Georgia, to \$1,187 in Baltimore, Maryland (Nowak, 2002, p. 195). These values are estimated based on the beneficial functions trees perform and the ways these benefits influence property values.

Trees are planted in cities for many reasons. Their very presence can make urban environments more pleasant for the people who live, work, and play there. Oftentimes, people plant trees for their aesthetic qualities. Whether it is conscious or unconscious, people seem to want trees around them because the presence of natural features, particularly in urban environments, increases people's overall satisfaction with their living conditions (Schroeder, 1989, p. 292). Less well known is the full extent trees' ecological benefits and their function in the equilibrium of the earth's entire ecosystem, far beyond the city limits. As Gary Moll, *American Forests* vice president said, "When urban forests are viewed for their role in larger ecosystems, a wide range of values and benefits can be connected to them" (MacDonald, 1996, p.27). Therefore, before I present the benefits of trees on the human psyche, I will first provide an abbreviated list of what research tells us about the effect urban trees have on ecosystems at both the local level and for the entire earth.

By shading our buildings and blocking winter winds, trees contribute to energy conservation because they reduce the cost of heating and cooling. Three trees for every other single family home could save about 2 billion dollars in energy costs. This energy

reduction would result in a 9 million ton per year reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from power plants (Dwyer, 1992, p. 228). Rowan Rowntree of the U.S.D.A Forest Service found that urban forests in Dayton, Ohio, resulted in a reduction in outside summer air temperatures of 25 percent (Moll, 1989, p. 51). These numbers would only increase with plantings of more trees and other plant materials.

Trees can be considered elements of an overall strategy to improve and ultimately restore air quality in our cities. Trees benefit public health by removing gaseous pollutants such as ozone, carbon monoxide, and sulphur dioxide. Planting 500,000 trees in Tucson, Arizona, was estimated to have reduced airborne particulates by 6,500 tons per year (Dwyer, 1992, p. 228).

In her thesis on stormwater management, Clotho Spinner of Louisiana State University explains the hydrologic cycle (Spinner, p. 11). Rain falls to earth. It is absorbed by leaves and roots of plants. It can replenish surface and ground water or it can evaporate back into the atmosphere. When rain falls onto impermeable surfaces, which are abundant in urban areas, it flows over the surface of the earth and is called runoff. Urban forests can help reduce the rate and volume of stormwater runoff. Trees in Tucson generated \$600,000 in savings associated with stormwater management (Dwyer, 1992, p. 229). In many cities near large bodies of water, every time people wash their hands with anti-bacterial soap, fertilize and water their lawns, or clean their bathtubs they add pollutants to that water body. Add to that parking lot runoff, agricultural runoff, runoff from the development of roads and housing developments and you have a considerable amount of pollution flowing into water bodies. One simple answer is the filtration of runoff water before it gets to the water bodies. Trees produce a thick mulch

of leaf litter and hold soil in place. Because of trees, land around bodies of water can soak up the runoff and filter some of the pollutants out before it gets back into our earth's watersheds. (Moll, 1989, p. 53).

Noise abatement is another benefit of trees, particularly groupings of trees, in urban areas. Researchers estimate that belts of trees 100 feet wide and forty-five feet high can reduce highway noise by nearly 50 percent. Researchers also theorize that people are less troubled by noise when trees (< biblio >) screen the source.

A different sort of benefit is the way in which trees affect people psychologically. It is difficult to measure these benefits physically, but the positive impact of trees on people's moods, temperaments, and emotions is as important as the quantifiable environmental benefits. It is all the more meaningful considering that seventy-five percent of all Americans live, work, and play in metropolitan areas (McPherson, 2003, p. 21), meaning seventy-five percent of all Americans live in and around urban forests.

Simply put, urban forest environments provide psychological benefits to people who are able to be around them. These benefits include providing aesthetic surroundings, increased enjoyment of everyday life, and a greater sense of meaningful connection with the natural environment. People have also reported that trees provide settings for significant emotional and spiritual experiences (Dwyer, 1994, p. 13).

2.7 Urban Forestry in Conclusion

In urban settings, trees do much more than provide ornamentation. Clearly the previous pages regarding urban forestry and the importance of urban trees only scratch the surface. An entire thesis could be written about the ages-long history of trees in urban environments and about how trees benefit environments.

CHAPTER 3: CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methodology

No amount of research would allow me to analyze and critique neighborhood urban forestry programs as well as the case study method. This method enabled me to study these programs firsthand, to gain insight into each neighborhood's knowledge base, and to make concrete the facts that research can only generalize. This information was gathered from the actual creators of each project—the people who have made it their passion to see their projects through ups and downs, year after year. In order to thoroughly carry out my case studies of three neighborhood urban forestry programs, I conducted interviews, generated questionnaires, and toured the site of each neighborhood.

In his article, *A Case Study Method for Landscape Architecture*, Mark Francis gives the following definition for a case study as it is used in landscape architecture: A case study is a well-documented and systematic examination of the process, decision-making and outcomes of a project, which is undertaken for the purpose of informing future practice, policy, theory, and/or education (Francis, 2002, p. 16).

Based on participant interviews and the resulting anecdotal information, the case studies in this thesis will document and examine the developmental processes of urban forestry projects developed at the neighborhood level. The case studies allow me to pinpoint the key concepts and procedures, so that I can develop concrete guidelines for creating successful citizen-initiated urban forestry projects.

The methodology I have chosen includes two steps:

1. Designing and conducting the case studies

2. Presenting the findings

3.1.1 Designing and Conducting the Case Studies

These studies are directed to production of a model for developing citizen-initiated, neighborhood urban forestry programs. Therefore, the case study of each neighborhood is designed to produce the most thorough set of findings, in order to produce a model that works for most neighborhoods. In the future, neighborhoods can use the information from the stories each neighborhood has to tell and put their own twists on these ideas to create urban forestry programs of their own.

Case studies are used to bring out certain kinds of information (Francis, 2004, p. 19). In this case they will shed light on three excellent projects worthy of duplication. The case studies here will focus primarily on the specific steps taken by three particular neighborhoods to get their programs up and running and kept on track over time. These case studies examine successful and still-thriving neighborhood urban forestry programs worthy of replication. The case studies will identify specific components that form the foundation for proven neighborhood urban forestry programs and their key distinguishing components. The information gathered is unique to each particular neighborhood, but it can be used to establish a model that will enable residents of other neighborhoods to create their own urban forest and become responsible for its continued existence.

The case studies are studied sequentially to comparable analysis. The questions asked and the procedure for gathering the information is consistent throughout each study. The information generated in each case study will be gathered through these methods: interviews, questionnaires, and site visits.

The Interview

In the interviews I will examine the key characteristics of each neighborhood's project based upon those presented in the introduction of *Neighborhood-based Planning* by Wendelyn Martz: purpose, resources, scope of plan, graphic quality, time frame, and local participation (Martz, 1990, p.3-6). Martz explains the important role each of these elements plays in neighborhood-based planning. I will use a combination of these as the foundation for my interviews: Background, Purpose and Development of the Plan, Resources that Make the Program Work, Scope of Plan and Time Frame, and Neighborhood Participation. Each case study will collect the same set of information using questions designed to provide answers that will cover all stages of the process. The questions that guide all the interviews are as follows:

Background

- What was the original reason for creating this project?
- Who in your neighborhood first identified the need?
- How did this person or persons communicate with others in the neighborhood?

Purpose and Development of the Plan

- Was a committee chosen to establish and direct a plan?
- How did this project fit into your preexisting civic association?
- Could you describe the process used to define the specific intent of the project and how a plan was developed?
- Did you find it necessary to first complete a tree inventory?

Resources that Make the Program Work

- What part did these outside organizations play in your program's success?
 - Nonprofit urban forestry groups
 - Municipal agencies
 - State agencies
 - Federal agencies
 - Online resources
- Regarding raising money, do donations come from neighborhood residents and businesses?
- What types of fundraising methods work best?
(The next two questions, only if you have grant money)
- Do you have a grant writer?

- Who monitors the proper expenditure of the grant money?
- How is the money allocated to specific maintenance needs like pruning, irrigating, etc?
- Are there other types of financial or non-financial resources that have been helpful?

Scope of Plan and Time Frame

- What do you consider short-term priorities?
- What do you consider long-term priorities?
- How are maintenance jobs delegated?

Neighborhood Participation

- What are the responsibilities of leaders of this project?
- What are the ways for neighbors to participate?
- Do you use a newsletter or communicate in other ways with project participants?
- Have there been any problems working with the neighborhood?
- What has been the main benefit of this project for this area and the city?
- If you could give one piece of advice to other neighborhood urban forestry programs, what would it be?

The Questionnaire

Following the interview, the interviewees filled out questionnaires designed to fill in any gaps stemming from the interviews. While the interview questions were designed to pinpoint the key characteristics of successful neighborhood-based planning projects, the questionnaire is designed to examine all aspects of the projects in the format of a case study examination. Mark Francis (2004) lists specific elements that a full case study, dealing with a design project should include. Making only minor changes, I used these same elements to formulate the questions in the questionnaire. The questionnaire is as follows:

Baseline information/context

- Location of the neighborhood?
- Approximate size of the neighborhood?
- Approximate number of residents in the neighborhood?
- Project creators and leaders throughout the life of the project?
- Technical assistance?

Roles of the key participants

- Project creators, leaders, and/or organizers?
- Technical assistants?
- Users?
- What is the nature of the project's team?
- Who leads the team?
- What is their role in the beginning of the project?
- How does this change during the course of the project?

Financial

- What was the initial budget?
- How has it changed from year to year?

Process

- Decision making process?
- Implementation process?
- Who influences a project's decisions and outcomes? Why?
- How does a project come together?

Definitions of and responses to problems

- What problem(s) is the project trying to solve (both in the past and present)? Was it solved? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Were other problems solved?

Goals

- What are the key goals (social, ecological, aesthetic)?
- How were they set?
- Who defined them?
- Did the goals change during the course of the project? If so, how?

Program— (By *program* I mean the priorities and all the ingredients necessary to make your project work.)

- How was the program developed?
- Who developed it?
- Was it modified during the course of the project?

Maintenance and Management

- What are the problems of management and maintenance?
- What are the maintenance costs?
- What are the installation costs?

Scale

- What is the size of the project? Amount of site coverage?

Time

- How well does the project fare over time?
- How does the project age incrementally?

Unique constraints

- How were they addressed in the process?

Community

- How is the community served by this project?
- What is its social impact? Meaning?

Environmental sensitivity and impact

- How is the environment served by this project?
- What is its contribution to sustainability?

Lessons learned

- Describe the lessons learned.

Future Issues

- What are any future issues?
- Do you see the project changing scope or its program in the future?

The Site Visit

At the time of the interviews, I toured the neighborhoods with the project leaders in order to see first hand the work they have done. The site visits allowed me to compare my findings from the interview and the questionnaire with the way the project's results actually look.

3.1.2 Presenting the Findings

After the critical aspects of each case study are gathered, that range of information will be documented in a specific format. The format will be based on a format template presented by (Francis, 2004) to study design projects. I have made slight alterations to the format where necessary to better address the key issues associated with neighborhood projects versus those associated with design projects. For example, the format template

includes the subjects: landscape architect and client. I will substitute technical assistance for landscape architect and project creators for client.

The information gathered in each case study will be presented in this format:

Full Case Study and In-depth Analysis

- Project name
- Location
- Date created
- Date completed
- Progress to date
- Project goal
- Financial
- Education
- Technical assistance
- Project background and history
- Role of the project's directors
- Role of neighborhood residents
- Maintenance
- Photographs
- Lessons learned
- Future issues/plans
- Contacts for further information
- Archival research (e.g. project records, newsletters, etc.)
- Interview

3.2 Selection of the Study Areas

The neighborhoods and their urban forestry projects studied here are:

Central High Neighborhood: Central High Neighborhood Urban Forestry Program
Little Rock, Arkansas

Boulevard Oaks Neighborhood: Trees for Boulevard Oaks
Houston, Texas

Inman Park Neighborhood: Inman Park's Tree Watch
Atlanta, Georgia

These three neighborhoods and their projects were chosen because they *have* urban forestry programs that were created and run by the residents of the neighborhood.

A thorough review of published literature and inquiries among professionals in urban forestry revealed that there are few neighborhoods that have created a group responsible for planting and maintaining their own trees. There are, however, many nonprofit groups that do urban forestry work in our country's neighborhoods. However, in this case, the nonprofit raises the money and then approaches the neighborhood with ideas and volunteers. The neighborhoods studied here identified a need in their urban forest, organized themselves, raised their own money, and contacted groups outside their neighborhood for advice and technical assistance. That sets them apart from other outside-influence-driven neighborhood projects.

To find these neighborhoods I conducted an extensive search. I started with the website *TreeLink*. TreeLink describes itself as a site created "to provide information, research, and networking for people working in urban and community forestry. For the researcher, the arborist, the community group leader, the volunteer - our purpose is to inform, educate, and inspire" (www.treelink.org). One of TreeLink's functions allows viewers to do state by state searches that list every urban and community forestry entity in that state. This is how I began my search. I contacted the nonprofits, state urban foresters, and municipal urban foresters in every state. I described what I was looking for. This is the form email I sent to a number of urban forestry professionals in each state:

I am just beginning my thesis for Louisiana State University's Landscape Architecture master's program. I am trying to find examples of neighborhoods that have identified a need in their urban forest and then organized themselves to address that need, taking their project through the stages of planning, to installation, and long-term maintenance. I want to learn how the neighborhood worked through all the steps of funding, planning, designing, and using available outside resources, etc. I am interested in understanding how neighborhoods have accomplished urban forestry projects for themselves as opposed, for example, to

working under the direction of a nonprofit organization or a municipal arboriculture entity.

Have you heard of any neighborhoods completing urban forestry projects? No matter how large or how small the project (whether it's plantings, pruning or maintenance, insect/disease control), I am interested in learning how they did it. Understanding all their successes, failures, and challenges would help me--every bit helps.

Most of my contacts knew of no neighborhoods that had done such a project. While many others described work nonprofit groups had done for neighborhoods, the type I describe in the previous paragraph were rare. Here are two of the responses I received that are typical of most of the responses:

Ann,

While I cannot think of any neighborhoods at this time, I have forwarded your email on to our state advisory council board of directors. Perhaps you will hear from one of them directly. I wish you well.

Katie M.K. Kause, Community Assistance Forester
Urban & Community Forestry Assistance Program
Oregon Department of Forestry

Hi Ann,

First, I wonder how you got our name? We have a few Baton Rouge contacts. I was out there in the summer and had a great time which included a visit to your horticulture center at LSU. You have some truly amazing trees to steward in your lovely city. It was quite striking to see giant-size versions of many of the same species we have here.

I'm not aware of any program such as you described. We do advanced homeowner level training called "Citizen Forester" but I'm not aware of any of them organizing their efforts. It's a really great idea, though. Many (if not most) cities are enacting ordinances regulating the care, removal and replacement of existing trees. The big stricture in urban forestry right now is enforcement of those tree ordinances. There just aren't enough municipal personnel to monitor or enforce the law. Having an interested and informed citizen group on patrol could make a big difference.

Good luck and keep me posted on how you progress.

Scott Harris
Urban Forestry Coordinator
TreeFolks, Inc.

Then I received these three emails which turned out to provide me with my three case study neighborhoods: Boulevard Oaks, Central High, and Inman Park, all of which had created urban forestry programs for their neighborhoods. The emails are presented here:

Dear Ms. Allen,

I suggest you contact Evalyn Krudy who manages Boulevard Oaks and its tree planting. She can help you.

Treely,
Kathy Lord
Trees for Houston

Hi Ann,

The Central High Neighborhood Association, Inc. in Little Rock put together a great urban forestry program using our urban and community forestry assistance grant dollars over the years. Ethel Ambrose organized this program and she is the one you will want to speak with. Her phone number is 501-375-1829.

Patti S. Erwin
Urban Forestry Program Coordinator
Arkansas Forestry Commission

Dear Ms. Allen,

Thanks for your note. The chairs of our tree watch committee are Richard Westrick and Nancy Morrison. They have been instrumental in getting our effort underway and IPNA [Inman Park Neighborhood Association] is proud of the progress they and their committee have made.

I have copied Nancy and Richard on this message so they will have the benefit of your note and you will have their contact information. I am sure we will be interested in seeing your final work product. Thanks again for your interest.

Al Caproni
President, IPNA

This is not to say these are the only three neighborhoods that have done this. I am sure there are others. However, my search, which took approximately one month, produced only these three that matched exactly what I was looking for.

CHAPTER 4: CENTRAL HIGH NEIGHBORHOOD URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM

4.1 Case Study of the Central High Neighborhood Urban Forestry Program

The information presented in this case study was gathered through several means including an interview with Ethel Ambrose and Cliff Riggs, the co-creators and administrators of the Central High Neighborhood Urban Forestry Program, a questionnaire, a tour of the Central High neighborhood, and communications via internet with both Cliff Riggs and Ethel Ambrose.

Project Name. Central High Neighborhood Urban Forestry Program

Location. Little Rock, Arkansas

Date Created. 1990

Progress to Date. Of the neighborhood's approximately 100 square blocks, 45% is completed.

Trees are only planted on city property in the public right-of-way.

Date Completed. Ongoing

Neighborhood Description. The neighborhood is seventy-percent African American and has the lowest income level of any census tract in the city. There are homeowners, but the neighborhood is made up predominately of rental properties. Currently, more houses in the neighborhood are being renovated and sold to homeowners. The neighborhood encompasses approximately 100 square blocks.

In 1957, the local high school, Central High School, was at the center of a nationally publicized school integration conflict. As the school became desegregated, the neighborhood experienced white flight as many families moved out to avoid having to integrate. As a result, the houses went from owner-occupied to rentals owned by

absentee landlords. The neighborhood is beginning the slow process of revitalization. Many of the same people behind Central High's tree plantings are pushing the neighborhood's revitalization efforts forward.

Central High Neighborhood Inc. (CHNI). The Central High Neighborhood Urban Forestry Program functions within the neighborhood's civic association: Central High Neighborhood Inc. CHNI was formed in 1980 to help reverse the trend of neighborhood degradation. CHNI created a Long Range Strategic Plan for neighborhood revitalization.

Project Background. In 1990 many of the neighborhood's trees, including trees planted during the neighborhood's original development, were destroyed in a storm. This event caused several residents in the neighborhood to look at the state of their urban forest and create a long-term plan to insure its continued existence. These residents were already active in the Central High Neighborhood, Inc., the neighborhood's nonprofit civic association.

As their initial effort, Little Rock's Department of Parks and Recreation was asked for assistance planting 27 willow oaks to replace some of what they lost in the storm.

A committee to direct the urban forestry program was created and added to CHNI. At that time the City of Little Rock had no urban forester so the committee worked with the city's horticulturalist who put them in contact with a private arborist. This arborist, Patti Erwin, created a tree inventory for the neighborhood that became the basis for their future plantings.

In 1991, they developed a long-range plan and began implementation in a six-block pilot area. They chose to focus their planting efforts in a six-block target area

instead of the entire neighborhood because this allowed them to get the most out of their limited resources, and it made the biggest visual impact. The original target area also held the greatest number of homeowners in the neighborhood including the chair of the urban forestry program. This made it easier for him to both remind his neighbors to water and care for the newly planted trees and to monitor their progress.

In 1993, CHNI was awarded a \$2000 matching grant from the Arkansas Forestry Commission. With this money, they began Phase I of their long-term plans. In their six-block target area, they removed trees too weak for retention and pruned remaining trees for a healthy and expansive canopy. The following year CHNI was awarded another grant from the Arkansas Forestry Commission, this time for \$7000. With this money, they began Phase II in which they planted twenty-seven upper story trees and several under story, flowering trees.

In 1995, \$2000 in grant money was awarded to CHNI from the City of Little Rock under its Neighborhood Grants Program. That year they began expanding beyond their pilot area, and Phase III was implemented with the planting of 32 under story trees and the pruning of existing trees for deadwood. The following year, CHNI was awarded a matching grant of \$2637 from the Arkansas Forestry Commission to develop an educational brochure on their Urban Forestry Plan.

They continue to seek funding,, as they move to each new target area. In 2000, ten years after the project was founded, they had expanded the six-block target area to a thirty-six square block area. The pattern of activities continues to be removal of deadwood (entire trees and limbs), pruning for canopy, planting infill trees for shade, maintaining young trees to insure optimum crowns and health, planting under story,

flowering trees while educating the community as to the value of trees. They call this their “quiet revolution.”

Project Goal. First and foremost, the goal is to reestablish the neighborhood’s tree canopy. In addition to that, the original aspiration was to establish an urban forest in the neighborhood’s public rights of way, containing lush hardwood trees above and, growing below them, flowering under story trees such as redbuds and dogwoods. Basically, they wanted to have a forest landscape thriving on the neighborhood’s public rights of way. Their goals can be classified as social, ecological, and aesthetic. On a social level, the goal is to improve the quality of life and to encourage neighbors to take pride in their trees. The project also helps people understand their connection to the land. Ecological goals are to provide trees for shade and shelter from storms, habitat for wildlife, absorption of air pollutants, and control water runoff. Aesthetically, the goal is to provide beauty for the eyes and for the soul. Ultimately, the goal is to “green” their neighborhood. These goals have not changed over time.

This vision was not developed over months of brainstorming sessions. Cliff Riggs, the farsighted resident who first had this dream for his neighborhood, describes it as happening quite simply.

He said,

I went to bed one night and I had a vision. When I woke up, I decided I wanted to live in the forest because I had grown up in a forest. I’m in the city now and there is no forest. Honestly, it was that basic. It was just an idea. No one gave us the idea. It just came to us.

All the decision makers agreed upon a vision of how they wanted the neighborhood to look in the future, and they settled to work on their long-range goal.

Technical Assistance. While Cliff Riggs and Ethel Ambrose had the vision necessary to reforest their neighborhood with trees, they did not have all the necessary scientific knowledge. They needed education and instruction in such areas as species selection and tree care in a harsh urban environment. Therefore, since its inception, the founders of Central High's Urban Forestry Program have had the assistance of several knowledgeable professionals. The majority of the guidance has been provided by these individuals and organizations:

Phoebe Stevens, City of Little Rock, Horticulturalist
Patti Erwin, the private consultant/now the Urban Forestry Program Coordinator
for the Arkansas Forestry Commission
Peter Rausch, Little Rock Urban Forester
Staff from Arkansas Forestry Department

Currently, the City of Little Rock has no nonprofit urban forestry organization. Therefore, Central High Neighborhood Inc. had to go elsewhere for assistance for such tasks as selecting tree species, advice on site locations for planting, and production of tree inventories. The City of Little Rock had no urban forestry department nor an urban forester. CHNI had to rely on different but similar organizations. Initially, they asked the city's Parks Department for assistance planting twenty-seven willow oaks. The city's horticulturalist introduced them to an urban forester in private practice. They hired this urban forester to compile an inventory of the neighborhood's trees. Eventually, this urban forester, Patti Erwin, went on to become the Urban Forestry Program Coordinator for the Arkansas Forestry Commission. Through her position there she has been able to inform the neighborhood of federal urban forestry-related grants.

They sought assistance wherever they could. Ethel Ambrose explained,

There is no way that we have the people or the resources to do the things that need to be done in our neighborhood, and we fully recognize that. We seek out and accept help wherever we can find it. We may go to the University. There is an organization called Metro Plan that deals with statistics for five counties. We may go to them for stats, or we may go to somebody out of state. We may go to our next door neighbor. We are seeking help wherever it is needed and where it is logical. I'll tell you a funny little aside about this. Cliff is a retired teacher and he now has a yoga studio. One of his students is a professional photographer. Well, we needed photography. So Cliff traded yoga lessons for photography. So it's thinking small and making do with what you have.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Project's Administrators. The creators and directors of this program present the vision for a long-range urban forest to the neighborhood residents. The role of the two co-creators, Cliff Riggs and Ethel Ambrose, has been consistent from the outset. Other neighborhood residents are brought into the program as they become available. This neighborhood puts a strong emphasis on education. Therefore, much of their time is spent planning continuing education programs explaining the benefits of urban forestry for the residents and the students of Central High School. They also find grant sources to provide the financial support for the program, write the grant proposals, and administer the grants.

Financial. The project is completely funded with grant money. The state urban forester informs Ethel and Cliff of available grant money that they would be eligible to receive. Having grant writing experience, Ethel Ambrose writes the grant proposals and administers the grants.

Roles and Responsibilities of Neighborhood Residents. Originally, the residents in the Central High neighborhood were going to be held responsible for the upkeep (mainly the watering) of the trees planted on their properties. The homeowners were to provide the necessary attention required to ensure the survival of newly planted trees. They were to

water and keep the tree healthy by not damaging its branches or compacting the soil it grew in. However, it soon became evident that just because people had been given a free tree did not mean they would care for it.

Therefore, the role the majority of the residents have is a simple one: being receptive to the urban forestry committee's educational activities. They get help from the residents who are willing to provide it, but the majority of residents do not have the means to help financially. However, they can be sympathetic to the program's goals by educating themselves and their children as to the importance of trees and their needs; this is where CHNI's urban forestry committee focuses the majority of their educational activities.

Education. For the CHNI, education is a top priority for all aspects of the association's efforts. Education is as important as tree plantings. Educating themselves, as members of the urban forestry committee, as well as the residents of the neighborhood about the value of urban forestry is a key component of CHNI's long-term urban forestry plan.

The most important aspect of their education program is tree care. If the neighborhood's residents do not understand how a tree grows and the care and maintenance it requires, the trees they plant will not survive. For example, they have had problems with the neighborhood children seeing the trees not as living organisms but as playthings. They frequently swing on trees and break their branches off to make them into swords. Adults also damage the newly planted trees by parking their cars on their root systems. Education, like reforestation, is a slow process. Cliff Riggs, the project co-creator said,

We did put out little fliers saying, 'the trees are now in summer mode, if it doesn't

rain once a week, at least take a gallon of water out to pour on the roots,' and that kind of stuff. Well, what we've learned was a lot of these homes are owned or rented by older people who might have grandchildren living with them, younger kids. Their investment in energy doesn't seem to be in that [watering the trees]. The other thing is, 'take your hose and soak the tree.' Not only did we find that they didn't have buckets, but they didn't have hoses. Some of the people in houses didn't have outside faucets. That's when we said we've got to find other means to water these trees on a regular basis.

In time, education helped curtail this easily preventable damage. To do this, they publish educational brochures and flyers which are distributed to residents, encouraging their support in the maintenance of the street trees. To ensure success beyond the founders' lifetimes, they involve local children in Boy Scout groups, 4-H groups, and local schools. They started an essay contest on urban forestry for students at Central High School. They give \$1000 worth of prizes for the top four essays (fig. 2). To raise their profile of the contest, they make the presentation of the check at the city board meetings.

Brochures are frequently handed out to inform and update residents about the history of the program and its current projects. When a family moves into the neighborhood, someone from the committee drops by to deliver brochures and to explain, in person, about the urban forestry program.

Tree Inventory. In 1996, the neighborhood hired a professional arborist to create a tree inventory for the neighborhood. The inventory only takes into account the trees between the sidewalk and the curb. It is used to make recommendations for the removal of trees, pruning, and infill planting to assure species variety while providing a benchmark to consistently guide their work year by year. Central High has used their inventory as a

baseline over the years. After 14 years, they began a second update, but they found updating it every five years would better reflect what is actually in the ground.

Maintenance and Management. About their maintenance efforts, Cliff Riggs said, “Initially, we assumed that anybody who got a tree in front of their house would be so enamored with getting to have a tree that they would feel invested, but that isn’t true.” Over the years as trees were broken by neighborhood children, Cliff Riggs and Ethel Ambrose began to attach the newly planted trees to stakes using ropes. These helped to both stabilize the tree and to visually remind people that this is a special tree. Likewise, they had trouble getting residents to keep the newly planted trees watered. Riggs and Ambrose had to find means other than relying on the residents to keep the trees watered. They were able to get assistance from the city’s Parks and Recreation Department who send watering trucks to the neighborhood during periods of little rain.

Photographs.

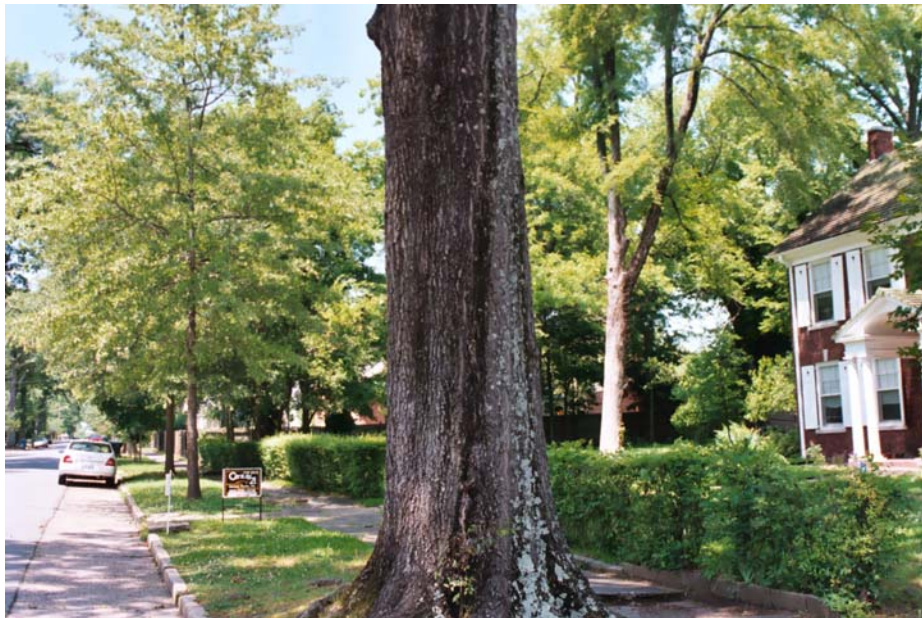


Fig. 1 CHNUFP’s willow oaks grow in the neighborhood’s right of way.



Fig. 2 Oaks and a redbud planted by CHNUFP.



Fig. 3 Willow oaks, planted on both sides of the street by CHNUFP.

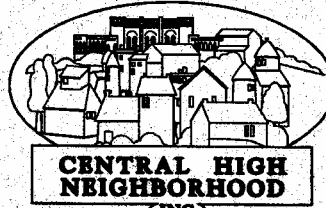


Fig. 4 Trees growing in the public right of way were part of the original planting.

Lessons learned. (1) Develop a plan and work from it, (2) Be consistent, be persistent in pursuit of your vision for the future; (3) Educate others about your goals and create allies; (4) Be flexible; (5) Be hopeful; (6) Utilize expert assistance wherever it is available; (7) Keep Margaret Mead’s mantra in mind: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.” Also, keep in mind that time enhances the project because people can see the results as the trees grow.

Contacts for Further Information. Ethel Ambrose (479) 442-8627 and/or Cliff Riggs (479) 327-1780

Archival Research (e.g. project records, newsletters, etc.).



"We've Got Heritage."

May 2001

The recent pruning done in our neighborhood was part of an ongoing Urban Forestry Project.

In 1990, CHNI planted 27 willow oaks to replace lost trees. We did this in cooperation with the Little Rock Department of Parks and Recreation.

In 1993, CHNI was awarded a \$2,000 matching grant from the Arkansas Forestry Commission and thus began our Long Range Urban Forestry Project to reforest our neighborhood as well as remove trees too weak for retention and prune the remaining trees for canopy ... above the street lights.

Our grant allows us to prune only trees on the city right-of-way between the curb and the sidewalk. These trees are public property and should not be cut or pruned except as part of our official street tree maintenance program.

WEED WACKERS CAN KILL TREES. When mowing stay well back from the trees so the string or blade does not hit the tree. Instruct anyone you hire to do yard work in the proper care of our trees.

We are on our way to creating a lush urban forest in our 100 block survey area.

For questions or ways to help, call 372-1780.

Fig. 5 This newsletter was sent out to all the residents of the Central High neighborhood to inform of the program's progress and to educate the residents about proper tree care.



"We've Got Heritage"

URBAN FORESTRY IN THE CENTRAL HIGH NEIGHBORHOOD

AN OVERVIEW

The objectives of our Urban Forestry Program in the Central High Neighborhood are to manage urban vegetation in a way that improves the quality of life in the neighborhood, increases property values and supports economic development.

A century ago, the area now known as the Central High Neighborhood was forested with hardwood trees. As nineteenth century Little Rockians looked for homesites beyond the boundaries of the original town, they platted Centennial Addition and began to clear the forest which covered the area. Building methods in that time did not call for clear cutting before construction began. Consequently, many trees were preserved on both public and private property.

During the last decades of the Twentieth Century, the ageing giants which gave shade to our neighborhood were suffering from the ravages of time and neglect. In 1990 a storm brought down so many trees it left the neighborhood looking like a plucked chicken.

The Central High Neighborhood Association (CHNI) petitioned the city for and received help in replanting some of the street trees lost to the storm. Realizing what trees mean to the quality of life, the residents of this very diverse community focused on urban forestry as a tool for combating neighborhood deterioration.

With assistance from the Arkansas Forestry Commission and the City of Little Rock Department of Parks and Recreation, a tree survey for our 100 square block area was commissioned. The survey was done by a professional arborist. This survey gives us a benchmark and consistently guides the work as it progresses year by year.

The Urban Forestry Program exists within the context of our overall, long range development plan. Our long range plan includes the following five initiatives: economic, educational, built and natural environment, political and legal.

Educating ourselves and others as to the values of urban forestry is a key component of our plan. An educational brochure was produced. Flyers are distributed to residents encouraging their support in the maintenance of street trees and their own property. Boy Scouts, 4-H youth and students from local schools are involved in the program.

Fig. 6 This newsletter was sent to each household in the Central High neighborhood to inform residents of the program's progress.



URBAN FORESTRY IN THE CENTRAL HIGH NEIGHBORHOOD

The objective of our Urban Forestry Program is to manage urban vegetation in a way that improves the quality of life in the Central High Neighborhood and increases the value of real property.

The CHNI Urban Forestry Program began as damage control in 1990. High winds toppled dozens of magnificent oak trees across the city. Our neighborhood was particularly hard hit. The loss of these hundred year old giants left our once beautiful tree lined streets barren and ugly.

Our target area for the first year was the six block area on Summit Street between 14th Street and Wright Avenue. Trees too weak for retention were removed. Remaining trees were pruned for canopy. In subsequent years, infill trees were planted for shade. Flowering, understory trees such as dogwood and redbud were planted to add color to our treescape.

To support our master plan for urban forestry, a survey of trees between sidewalks and curbs in our 100 square block was carried out by a professional arborist. The survey identified location, species and condition of trees present. A survey map, with recommendations for tree removal, pruning and planting, was produced.

From the outset, education has been a basic component of the program. People need to understand that trees are the lungs of a neighborhood and of a city. Planners and developers need to understand that trees do not cost money. They make money for the city.

Over the past six years, the Central High Neighborhood Urban Forestry Program has expanded to streets on either side of our target area on Summit Street. 133 trees have been planted to date. Despite seasons of drought, we have lost very few of our new plantations.

This neighborhood initiated project is a partnership between the Little Rock Department of Parks and Recreation, the Little Rock Department of Public Works and the Arkansas Forestry Commission. It offers proof of what can be achieved when government works to support neighborhoods.

April 23, 1997

Fig. 7 This newsletter was distributed to educate and update residents about the program's history.



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April 23, 1997

Fig. 8 Newsletter distributed to update resident about the history of the project.



FINAL REPORT

Urban & Community Forestry Assistance Grant for 2003-2004

Platted as the Centennial Neighborhood in the late Nineteenth Century, this neighborhood came to be identified with its famous high school – Central High School. During the first half of the Twentieth Century this area evolved from hardwood forest to a residential neighborhood with stately houses, schools, churches, hospitals and tree-shaded streets. It was home to the elite families of Little Rock as well as to working class families. It was racially as well as economically diverse.

The racial strife which occurred in the Central High Neighborhood during the 1950s led to changes in the fabric of the built and natural environment. In the wake of white flight came deterioration of housing stock. The magnificent old growth trees which graced the neighborhood went untended.

By the late 1900s, the trend toward revitalization of the neighborhood was gaining strength. In 1990, when high winds combined with water saturated soil wreaked havoc on our trees, the Central High Neighborhood, Inc. began to focus on the natural environment along with the built environment and a Long Range Urban Forestry Plan was developed. With strong support from the Little Rock Department of Parks and Recreation, Central High Neighborhood residents planted 27 willow oaks and developed a pilot urban forestry project on six blocks of Summit Street. Over the next fourteen years, with the invaluable support of the Arkansas Forestry Commission, the Central High Urban Forestry Project has expanded outward from that small pilot area for many miles. Public and private resources have enabled us to survey the trees in public spaces, develop a plan based on our survey, remove many unsightly and dangerous trees and develop an on-going program of urban forestry maintenance and to plant hundreds of trees in our public spaces.

Wishing to involve young people who will be future community leaders in our urban program, again this year the Central High Neighborhood, Inc. awarded \$1,000 to the winning essayists from Central High School for their essays relating to urban forestry and urban sprawl. Four winners were selected from a field of over 100 entries. The winning essays are carried on our web site at www.lrcentralhigh.org/CHNI.htm and on the web site for the City of Little Rock. Copies of the winning essays are enclosed.

Fig. 9 This newsletter was distributed throughout the neighborhood to inform residents about the history and its current progress.

4.2 An Interview with Central High Urban Forestry Program's Founders

Before beginning the interview, Ethel Ambrose handed me a piece of paper with a prayer printed on it. This prayer has been used in the Portuguese forest preservations for more than 1,000 years:

I am the heat of your hearth on the cold winter nights,
the friendly shade screening you from the summer sun,
and my fruits are refreshing draughts quenching your
thirst as you journey on.

I am the beam that holds your house, the board of your
table, the bed on which you lie, and the timber that
builds your boat.

I am the bread of kindness and flower of beauty.

“Ye who pass by, listen to my prayer: Harm me not.”

Narrators: Ethel Ambrose and Cliff Riggs **3 June 2004 [Date of Interview]**
Interviewer: Ann Allen
Transcriber: Ann Allen

Ambrose: In 1990, we had water-saturated ground and high winds, straight-line winds, not tornado. The whole city lost hundreds of giant old trees. Our neighborhood was particularly hard hit, and that is what caused us to look at our urban trees. Out of that experience we developed a long-range, beyond our lifetime urban forestry plan, and we work from a plan. We had surveys done, and the surveys indicated to us where dead trees needed to come out; where trees needed maintenance work; where we needed to plant infill trees for shade, and so on. We will take you over and show you the pilot area, which was six blocks, just one block east from here.

Riggs: We chose to not spot plant. We choose to make an impact, so we would take several blocks and do the upper story work and the under story planting and make

decisions about species and that kind of stuff. Because the tendency in an area that is trying to reverse the trend is... oh, here's something over here and here's something over here! Let's fix this up, and let's fix that up, and pretty soon you never see what it's going to look like when it's all done.

Allen: Did Patti [Arkansas State Urban Forester] help design a master plan to help you get what you wanted?

Ambrose: No, we, the neighborhood, designed the plan. We asked her to do the physical mapping of the trees for us. We had already come up with the long-range strategic plan.

Allen: Did the neighborhood select the tree species and the design?

Riggs: We got information from the urban forester or nurseries to find out what kind of species would be good. Then we had this discussion, 'Do we want to alternate with some different ones? Which ones will make it the longest? Which ones are blight resistant and all that kind of stuff. At first it was a little...make a mistake here and not over here. We are getting a little more savvy about which trees are the better ones to put in.

Ambrose: For example, on Summit Street for two or three blocks, we had a very bare area. We had almost nothing in the way of shade trees, and we knew eventually we wanted under story flowering trees: dogwood and redbud; that was part of the plan. We planted the dogwoods in an open space. Well, we learned that they love the shade, and we lost the dogwoods. That's what Cliff means when he says, 'We learned ...'

Riggs: Another thing we learned is that, initially, we assumed that anybody that got a tree in front of their house in the parking area would be so enamored with getting to

have that tree that they would feel invested, but that isn't true. Children who haven't been raised with a kind of forestry understanding see them as things you can bend, break off branches and slap each other with. So now we're always putting in a stake with ties. The stake is there to remind people that this is a special tree. It also reminds people to be careful where they park because in the days when these houses were built, there were not too many cars in our neighborhoods, and we don't all have garages. So people are still pulling off the road and parking within inches of the tree and packing the soil and then the tree will die. So these kind of urban forestry issues we discovered. I don't know if people planting in the suburbs have to deal with the kind of issues because of the different culture.

Allen: Do you have to present a new type of outreach to educate the residents about these trees?

Ambrose: Oh, absolutely! Education is a major part of the program. There is another support program in the neighborhood. To teach young people to value trees and not swing on them and not hit each other on the head with them is very hard work and it is uphill. We have a very high number of renters in the neighborhood, but that trend is changing.

Allen: Can you talk about the makeup of the neighborhood?

Ambrose: It is about 70% African American.

Allen: What is the income level?

Ambrose: It is very low income. Our census tract is the lowest income in the city.

Allen: Is it beginning to go through the process of gentrification?

Ambrose: As we speak, we have no gentrification; we are working very hard to avoid gentrification. We are trying to change the trend line. We have developed over a period of many years a long-range strategic plan dealing with five initiatives: economic development, education, the built and the natural environment (which is where urban forestry comes in), legislation, and the political. We have accomplished a lot of our goals. We have a lot of works in progress and many of them are beyond our lifetime. We have a long-range plan, and we work from that plan. I want to back up though. You were asking who initiated the program, where did we get our information, who did the plan, and so on. Are you familiar with Wendell Berry? In one of his essays, he talks about thinking small, thinking locally, because historically in this country we have thought in grand terms. The far frontier and Westward, Ho! We always thought big. We need to think locally. He talks about the land and man's relationship to the land. For so many years, people of your generation have grown up in the kind of culture where people look outside themselves and outside their communities to get things done. Some outside entity: the government or the university. It's okay to do things for yourselves. The city doesn't understand things; they get very confused. Our planning department does not plan. The city has no plan for urban forestry, for development, or for anything else. They have no plan! We have been working on our plan for a long time. They figured out the city really should have a plan. So they decided to make neighborhood plans. It was a cookie cutter type of thing. They didn't talk to people in the neighborhoods. You know bureaucrats...

Riggs: They called a meeting and they had this outline. The discussion would go on; they would fill in their proposed outline from the discussion, and then they had their

community plan. When they got to us, we said, 'We don't want that.' We've got this plan that we're working on, and it's going to take us years to get it firmed up. They couldn't handle that. So we've become the evil stepchild, that group that is doing its own thing. Here we have, supposedly, city experts, and we were finding experts all over who were volunteering their time to create what we were able to put our information into. It's still an ongoing issue that we have taken this intuitive ourselves.

Ambrose: The city is confused. They are coming on board. We've been at it for twenty years, and they are slowly, slowly, slowly coming on board. We have to reeducate and reeducate and reeducate. I'll give a specific example. As part of education, we wanted to involve young people. We started an essay contest on urban forestry for students at Central High School, which is our neighborhood school. And we give \$1000 worth of prizes for the top four essays. To raise the profile, we do the presentation of the check at the city board meetings. City board has this little citizen input time when people selling Girl Scout cookies and what have you can go and do their little thing or somebody from the zoo brings an owl. They do these kinds of things. We take all our winners down. It's like a PTA meeting. All the parents and the grandparents and the cousins for the winners show up. We have a big turn out. And we now have an urban forester; he's part of the program. Those city board meetings, in this town, are heavily watched. I mean they draw like CNN. You wouldn't believe the numbers of people who watch. So if you want to get publicity, that's a good place to be. So it raises the profile of urban forestry and it educates. It's a win-win situation, and it's a positive all around thing. See the \$1000 came from us, not the people of Little Rock, but the mayor doesn't understand that. He just can't get his mind around the idea that we are out here doing this for our

neighborhood, and it helps not only our neighborhood; it helps the whole city. He turns to the urban forester and he says, 'Think of all the trees that \$1000 could have bought.' We said, 'Yes, Mayor, but it wasn't the city's money. It was our money, and we opted to do this with it.' People have great difficulty, not only in Little Rock, believing that it's okay, even legal, to help yourself. ...For a community or a neighborhood to help itself.

Riggs: We have come through, and because of the crisis here there is still a strong entitlement mentality, and I would say that's from the fact that we suffered, for whatever reason, whether we're black or white. And now we're entitled to some things. That's not a very good way to build a diverse livable community if you are to be dependent upon entitlements. So every time somebody comes in to do something to us, and we had something happening very recently. The PR pieces go out and, 'if you want to help this disheveled community, give me money.' And not work within the context of how the community is trying to develop itself. It just never ends because there is a sense that poor urban areas can't do anything to help themselves, and you know, the publicity that's on the news and TV is always [about] not how people have helped themselves but how some organization or some funding grant people have given all this money to do this kind of stuff, and rarely are the stories about how the people have done it themselves. We are just constantly battling that. The other thing is the urban forester that Ethel keeps mentioning is very interesting because that was part of our original projection when we started our urban forestry program, to get the city to recognize that an urban forester would be unique and wonderful for the city. We don't claim that much anymore but really we were the seed.

Ambrose: Now our goal was and is to have a stand-alone department of urban forestry. Milwaukee has a very exemplary program, and we have heard the now-retired head of that program speak at a forestry conference. Right now, well three years ago, the city hired an urban forester. He's under the Department of Parks and Recreation and has a staff of three which is woefully inadequate. But we just push, push, push, and the person that was hired is very capable in his field, and he's also a draw in terms of politics. He survived in the political realm. There are a lot of people who would be capable in the field but would be a babe in the woods in the political arena. He does well in both, and that bodes well for the program. We never miss an opportunity, for example, when we do the checks for our essay contest, we point out, to not only the Mayor, but to the whole city, to keep doing it. It's a citywide program and they are doing incredibly well with limited resources, and we can say on camera, because they work so well and so efficiently, people assume there must be twenty of them but really there's only three. We need to continue to support staff. For our essay contest, the urban forester will meet with the classes in the advanced placement Environmental Science course at Central High. He met with five classes, 90 minutes each.

Allen: Little Rock does not have a nonprofit urban forestry program?

Ambrose: No. We are still in react-to-crises stage. If a developer denudes an area and the people who are living in the very expensive homes in the area are a couple of years later getting mudslides, they get up in arms. A group of them gets organized, and they go to the city boards and scream. But it's case by case. We have, as a result of Pete [the city urban forester] being here, passed an ordinance for the care of trees. If we

simply enforce that, we'd be in great shape but the developers are rich and powerful, and they have always done it their way.

Cliff: Perhaps the word *entitlement* has to be used here. The phrase that I hear from developers is, 'How can we as local yokels deny the developer his right to make a profit?' No matter what they do they have a right to do this.

Allen: So the ordinance doesn't threaten ticketing or fining when its rules are broken?

Ambrose: It's starting but it's brand new.

Riggs: When this ordinance was really being talked about the interesting thing was that there was this tract of land in east Little Rock. The developer realized that this ordinance might have some implications in the future on his huge development. So he went in there before it could be passed and bulldozed entire hills and wiped it clean cut and let it sit. That did cause some people to see that we did have some really detrimental things going on in our city. But it is still being repeated, and their idea (the developers) of reforestation is maybe putting in a row of crape myrtles. That kind of thing.

Ambrose: Six crape myrtles and two Bartlett pears will not suffice. This [the tree ordinance] was only passed in November, 2001, and it's part of Pete Rouch's work to educate the citizens and the developers, and at least ensure they have a copy of the ordinance in their hand, if they've read it or not--to educate, educate, educate.

Allen: At this point, can Pete hand out fines as he drives around the city and sees developers not adhering to the ordinance's guidelines? Can he slap a fine on them?

Ambrose: Well, he could. To answer your question, yes, it is his job to identify these places that yield problems. He could slap a fine on them. I think he is beginning to do

that and he eased into it. He didn't just start suddenly. First he nursed this along and got it passed by the city board.

Riggs: Remarkably quickly.

Ambrose: And then he started his education process. The idea being that it's better to have people cooperating than fighting. If he had just gone out and developers hadn't even seen this, and he started slapping fines on them.... he's diplomatic.

Riggs: Our city, like so many in the country, is really just developer driven. There is no plan.

Ambrose: Our city board has been in the hip pocket of developers since time out of mind.

Riggs: I want to go back to education in this particular neighborhood. We did put out little fliers about '...the trees are now in the summer mode, if it doesn't rain once a week, at least take a gallon of water out to pour on the roots,' and that kind of stuff. Well, what we've learned was, a lot of these homes are owned or rented by older people who might have grandchildren living with them, younger kids. Their investment in energy doesn't seem to be on that [watering the trees]. The other thing is, 'take your hose and soak the tree.' Not only did we find they didn't have buckets but they didn't have hoses. Some of the people in houses do not have outside faucets. That's when we said we've got to find other means to water these trees on a regular basis, and we did get some assistance through water trucks from the city. Pete, now, if we get to a place where there aren't many houses or it's a situation in which no amount of education is going to help, we appeal to him and we say, 'Can you get by here and water?' And he does.

Ambrose: If we give the impression that this is a destitute neighborhood, as we speak there is \$20 million dollars worth of house restoration going on in this immediate neighborhood. The city doesn't have its mind around that. That means we are putting back into the city of Little Rock \$40 million dollars a year. It's house by house. Now that Central High School is a National Historic Site we have developers who are coming in and saying, 'Oh, I'm going to buy up a whole block in the Central High neighborhood.' You shudder to think what they plan to do with it. So we are working on an overlay district around Central High that has design guidelines.

In terms of how we work and how we afford things, I want to come back to something Cliff touched on earlier and that is, there is no way that we have the people or the resources to do the things that need to be done in our neighborhood, and we fully recognize that. We seek out and accept help wherever we can find it. We may go to the University. There is an organization called Metro Plan that deals with statistics for five counties. We may go to them for stats, or we may go to somebody out of state. We may go to our next door neighbor. We are seeking help wherever it is needed and where it is logical. I'll tell you a funny little aside about this. Cliff is a retired teacher and he now has a yoga studio. One of his students is a professional photographer. Well, we needed photography. So Cliff traded yoga lessons for photography. So it's thinking small and making do with what you have.

Allen: How large is the neighborhood association?

Ambrose: In terms of the streets, from I-630 on the north to Right Ave. on the south. MLK on the east and Woodrow St. behind Central High School on the west.

Riggs: Give her our quote about the people who are actually working on this--the Margaret Mead quote.

Ambrose: 'Never doubt that a small number of dedicated people can change the world. No doubt it's the only thing that ever has.'

Riggs: And we do have a small group of dedicated people. Anytime you start a project like this you have to.

Ambrose: If you want to walk in here, I'll show you our urban forestry map. This is our tree inventory. We're sneaky because we showed this to the city and got it into their GIS system. When the mayor and the powers that be talk about 'your plan', we say, 'No, Mayor, it's 'our' plan.' We can't live without them [the city].

Riggs: And the legend tells you planting space, remove, prune, no requirements necessary. There's a stump, light pole, utility, because with urban forestry projects you've got to check underground. Are you planting it too close to a light and that kind of stuff. The tree ordinance planting that the city approved is 30' from the corner. In the original, we planted trees closer than 30' to a stop sign but now that's their plan so we're trying to keep that kind of....

Allen: To backtrack, can you go through the steps you took at the beginning of this process? There was a storm, trees were lost, you wanted to develop an urban forestry program within your neighborhood association... What were the first steps taken?

Ambrose: If you look at that little green sheet, one of the first things we did, we didn't know Patti existed, and we were brand new but we knew we needed to replant what we had lost. So we appealed to the City Parks department, and they worked with us and together we bought and they helped us replant 27 willow oaks. That was our initial

effort. We worked with the city's horticulturalist; there was no urban forester. That was one. Through her we met Patti Erwin. At that time she [Patti] was in private practice. We knew that we needed a survey as a basis for planting and so we raised the money to have the survey done. When somebody would come along and plant a tree, we would go back to the survey and see what the survey called for.

Riggs: This [the tree inventory] has been sort of a guide, and it sort of, in one sense, justifies that we are just not spot planting. We've got some kind of any overall view, and we bend rules every so often. We didn't want to always plant the same species, and we've changed that. They can't look at a little neighborhood association, just a bunch of local yokels just out there planting trees without any idea what's going on. We have an idea and we have a plan.

Ambrose: And the plan calls for species diversity so that--say you had Dutch Elm you wouldn't get wiped out. We also, in that first planting--the year we planted the 27 willow oaks--we had pro bono assistance from a local nursery owner, P. Allen Smith. He consulted with us on what was historical. What [trees] were here a hundred years ago, and what this forest was like initially, and what got taken out by developers and what got put back in. We had a lot of tree history and research that he did for us at the very beginning stage.

Allen: And his finding helped determine what was called for in the master plan?

Ambrose: Yes, so that we aren't planting... somebody says, 'Oh, that's a nice tree.' But is it native to Arkansas even?

Riggs: Or will it make it in the heat? The early years are the important part for these trees. As I've said, we've made some real goofs thinking that certain kinds of trees would make it in the heat and they don't.

Ambrose: Our historic district is gerrymandered because 51% of the housing stock in historic districts has to qualify, and we had lost so many houses. It's not a nice, neat rectangle, and we shudder every time a house goes down because some of them are qualifying houses.

Riggs: I think we need to say, Ethel, that the neighborhood association was here. The first major project that was beyond the neighborhood's other things was the urban forestry project. From that urban forestry project, we moved into the overlay districts and all that other kind of stuff, but it was the first major project.

Ambrose: Well, in 1990, in response to natural disaster, we planted 27 willow oaks to replace lost trees. In 1991, we developed a long-range urban forestry plan, starting with a six block target area, which we are going to show you. Then grants came, and we removed weak trees and so on. We say in our report, "The objective of our program is to manage urban vegetation in a way that improves the quality of life in the Central High neighborhood and increases the value of real property."

Allen: How did you know what grants to apply for? Who wrote the grants? Who carries it out? Who do you have hold the grant money?

Ambrose: How did we know what grants to write for? Well, through Phoebe Stevens, the city horticulturalist, we discovered Patti Erwin, and we discovered the urban forestry program, which is federal money, as you know, that comes down through the states. I was grant writer for the public library, and I knew how to do grants. Different

people have helped us out and steered us to other things. Now we are going for T-21 money. It used to be referred to as the Ice T project. It initially had to do with properties that abutted onto US highways; it had to be contiguous. They changed the regs, and if you had historic sites (Central High School)... So a couple of years ago we became eligible. So we can apply for T-21 federal dollars for streetscapes to implement portions or all of our master streetscape program.

Riggs: And how do we know this stuff? Because one of our unpaid consultants, Bill Hasby(?), is involved in this stuff, and he shares this wonderful information.

Ambrose: The landscape architect that we hired to do this with our National Trust grant money have worked on this Ice T stuff. He knows the people and the various offices at the federal, state, and local level. He has written them for other projects. He said, "I'll volunteer when you get ready and I'll help you with that grant." Patti Erwin loves the student essay contest. It is positive. It is good. It involves youngsters. A lot of the kids that attend school here do not live in this neighborhood.

Riggs: When you pull up the webpage and read the four essays, the one who won the first place, I had forgotten the impact of that little essay, as she ticked out the things the city doesn't have going. I was almost embarrassed for the city.

Ambrose: Four of the essays are on CHNA's website. They will be on the city's website, and they will be in the newsletter and so on. It all helps to raise consciousness. Now does everyone in the neighborhood have a full grasp of CHNA's urban forestry program? No. Lenin, the Russian leader, said that the job of the revolutionary is to patiently explain, and we view ourselves as revolutionaries---just explain over and over

and over. Renters move out or new homeowners move in and you just educate, educate, educate.

Riggs: That's the other thing, the turnovers. Once you've educated a group of renters, just as you think you've got that done, they're gone. Then how do you get in contact with them again and start the process over again? It's very difficult in urban settings like this, because until we get more and more homeowners who will stay, our education is just overpowering; we just can't keep up.

Ambrose: Do have a set of questions there you would like to ask?

Allen: Yes. First, how did you communicate with the rest of the neighborhood to get them on board as you began this project?

Ambrose: Word of mouth. We talked to neighbors. We knocked on doors.

Allen: What was the response when you knocked on say a renter's door and told them about the project?

Ambrose: I'll give you a specific example. One person, who is not a renter, Jeff (?), has lived here forever and ever. As we discussed this at neighborhood meetings, he sneered. In the early 1990s, crime peaked in this city. We were experiencing problems of crime, and he said, "Lady, blood is flowing in the streets, and you're asking me to think about trees. You're crazy." Then about four years into the project, Jeff knocked on our door, and he stood first on foot and then on the other, looked at the ceiling and looked at the floor, and he says, 'I don't really like you very much, and it pains me to do this but you were right. Trees do make a difference.'

Allen: At least he admitted it. There are studies that have proven that the presence of trees decreases domestic violence, crime, and increases worker productivity, not to mention all the environmental benefits.

Ambrose: In our little brochure we talked about that.

Riggs: That was the other key thing. The neighborhoods of the city worked together to get tax dollars passed to get better street-lighting. We realized immediately, in the older neighborhoods, that the street light is lost. So that's when we started this canopy stuff, and no street light is lost in the foliage. In terms of security that is a good thing.

Ambrose: In terms of health, if you are ever hospitalized, be sure to ask for a room with a view of trees. It happened to my husband, and the hospital staff was rather taken aback. There's hard research that shows people recuperate faster, leave hospitals sooner, require less medication, and all that. When I did my little spiel at the hospital, they looked at me like I was insane.

Allen: How was the committee chosen to establish and direct the plan?

Ambrose: Well, as is usually the case when you're seeking volunteers, a lot of it is who you can get to volunteer. In the case of Cliff Riggs, the committee chair, he has a background in botany and has taught science.

Riggs: I operate by the mantra, "Bloom where you were planted." I thought we needed to bloom a little more. We had a vision that sold for a little while. We don't use it that much anymore because that was the emotional appeal. We cannot visualize that the streets will have huge trees, and underneath them will be flowering trees, and underneath them will be flowers. When we get this done, people will want to walk in our

neighborhood. Well, that's a long way yet. That was the overall vision--that we would have this canopy of trees. We'd have the redbuds, dogwoods, and other little *Chinese pistachio*, and people would be encouraged to plant irises and whatever and turn it into a little garden. That clicked for a while. Then we got into the mechanics. How are we going to keep the kids from breaking the trees off? Who is going to water them? The vision sort of has faded away because we are in the mechanics of it right now.

Allen: Have you abandoned that vision completely?

Riggs: No. It's starting to come. There are individuals now that are taking some of the parking strips and turning them into flower beds. I'm about ready to do it but my wife is refusing to allow me dig them up because my garden is almost unmanageable for me. I would love to have in my front no grass to mow.

Allen: So, ultimately, in your master plan or in a perfect world, you would have large shade trees, under story trees and flowers on every piece of public right-of-way?

Ambrose: No, not necessarily, because you have utility lines but where it's possible and appropriate to. We look at the space where it's possible to plant a large tree and have the root system for a large tree and have it survive.

Riggs: Whatever is appropriate is what we were after, but knowing that a canopy has to be reestablished.

Ambrose: When we selected the target area, six blocks, Garber Engineers, an international firm, located in the neighborhood, were wonderful corporate partners. They do a lot of pro bono work for us. They did the streetscape plan for us for that six blocks. They did the utility check. We looked at period lighting. We looked at underground

wiring. They did a whole plan, for which they would normally charge thousands of dollars. So we had that plan for that six block area.

Allen: So you chose to start with a target area instead of tackling the entire neighborhood all at once?

Ambrose: You need to focus on an area. We had to start small because we have limited resources. Focus on an area and make an impact. If we had done a tree here and three trees there and four trees yonder, it would not have made an impact that working in a targeted, compact area would.

Riggs: The other thing I think we ought to say, honestly, is that Summit St. had established on it a lot of homeowners. There were renters, but there were a predominant number of homeowners. I live on that street. So it's easier for me to go to these homeowners and say, 'Can we pull this off?' We'll drag along the renter people as best we can. So it was a little bit of being realistic. To go pick somebody else's street that is ten blocks from my house? I have a job. I can't do all this. So that was part of the decision. The people who were on the CHNA board live on that street.

Allen: How did the urban forestry board fit into the functioning neighborhood association?

Riggs: We just added it. It became a functioning committee. I became chairman of the board, and we tried to get other people interested.

Allen: How did you create your plan? Your short-term goals and long-term goals?

Riggs: I went to bed one night and I had a vision. When I woke up, I decided I wanted to live in the forest, because I had grown up in a forest. Now I'm in the city, and

there's no forest. Honestly, it's that basic. It was just an idea. That idea, as it blossomed out, you know--bloom where you're planted. Nobody gave us the idea; it just came from us.

Ambrose: We had grown up in situations where people lived close to the land and husbanded the land. Whether it was a three foot strip in front of your house or whether it was a ten acre field. You knew that all human beings are dependent upon the land. We had moved away from that in our society, and we think that it is economically unhealthy and physically unhealthy for human beings to move away from the land. We talked about how people live up or down to their surroundings. If you live in a junky, blighted area, you don't feel very good about yourself. If you live in a beautiful area that has trees, flowers, and grass you feel better about yourself and feel more inclined to take care of your little patch of earth. Having grown up with that tradition, it seemed the natural thing to do.

Riggs: I would die literally, physiologically, emotionally as a human being if I couldn't be in the earth. The fourth winner of the essay contest, what's her?...

Ambrose: Vietnamese American.

Riggs: Vietnamese American. When I read her essay, I wanted it to be first place because it has to do with our relationship with the land. It is so beautifully said from her culture. They know what we forgot. We normally give three prizes but this time we gave four to recognize this concept--the interconnectedness that we are with the land. We have kids who have no interconnectedness with the land.

Ambrose: We have adults who have no interconnectedness with the land.

Riggs: My next door neighbor came to me when he saw what was happening to my piece of land and said, ‘Oh, Cliff, I’d love to have some trees. Do you think if we cut off one of these branches and I stuck it into the ground I could get a tree just like that?’ He was serious. He did not know anything about trees.

Ambrose: We had a board member at the time, and she hates trees because they drop leaves. She had her yard man top a specimen tree on public space that we had paid money to plant.

Allen: So what would happen in a situation like that?

Riggs: Well, we would have had to deal with that in the old days, but now we have this wonderful diplomat, Pete Grouse.

Ambrose: We try to educate people; let them know in the abstract. We have this ordinance, and we have it because it helps us in these ways to be aware of it. We hope we will head off people going out and chopping down their trees that they shouldn’t, knowing there are penalties if they do. Once in a while somebody says, “You killed that tree. The replacement will cost x number of dollars.”

Riggs: I think about the second year that we were into the program, I forget how many trees we planted that year, but one woman dug up a tree and moved it back into her yard. She would be classified, when I was growing up in my little community years ago, as the crazy lady. Another one took an ax and left the stump. We could see that it was all chopped up, and we did report that to the police, and we said it was destruction of public property. But in those days, the police could not focus on anything that minor.

Ambrose: In our society, a large number of people, the majority of people in our society, have lost their connection to the land. They don't realize that even if they are city dwellers, they are dependent upon agriculture for food, for the very basics.

Riggs: Remove us from our roots, and we are like trees that have been cut off. We see leaves as a nuisance. It is an interesting slice but really I think it's a slice of the whole culture. I think it's like the canary in the mine--if you have people who are seeing trees as detrimental, there's something very wrong. They were here way before we were and, hopefully, they'll be here after we're gone, along with roaches.

CHAPTER 5: TREES FOR BOULEVARD OAKS

5.1 Case Study of Trees for Boulevard Oaks

The information presented in this case study was gathered through several means including an interview with Evalyn Krudy, a questionnaire, a tour of the Boulevard Oaks neighborhood, and communications via internet with Evalyn Krudy, a member of Trees for Boulevard Oaks.

Project Name. Trees for Boulevard Oaks

Location. Houston, Texas

Date created. 1982

Progress to Date. The project has raised over \$140,000 and has planted well over 1,250 street trees. The trees are planted on city property only in the public rights-of-way.

Date Completed. The project is ongoing because holes appear in the neighborhood's planting pattern each year due to annual losses of 20-40 trees from construction, old age, and natural causes. In a newsletter entitled *Home Improvements and Construction Drive Tree Death and Damage Toll in Rice Area* authored by the Trees for Boulevard Oaks and mailed out to Boulevard Oaks residents, construction activities were listed as the main cause of tree death. These activities include building new front yard circular drives, installing automatic sprinkler systems, building masonry walls, raising or lowering lawn and garden grade levels, building larger new azalea or flower gardens over tree root zones, replacing sidewalks and driveways, building swimming pools, building new additions and garages, and constructing new houses. Construction projects are numerous in Boulevard Oaks; therefore, replacements are continuously needed.

Neighborhood Description. Boulevards Oaks is an inner city neighborhood located near Rice University, approximately four miles from Houston's downtown. The neighborhood was developed in the 1920s and 1930s with housing ranging from mansions to bungalows. There is a small development of ranch-style houses built after World War II. There are more than 1,250 residences and about 3,000 residents. Unlike the Central High and Inman Park neighborhoods, Boulevard Oaks did not experience the white flight of the 1950s and 1960s that caused many owner-occupied houses to become rental houses. Therefore, Boulevard Oaks has remained one of Houston's premiere neighborhoods, maintaining its beauty throughout the years.

Boulevard Oaks Civic Association (BOCA). Trees for Boulevards Oaks is a committee that operates within the Boulevard Oaks Civic Association. BOCA was formed in 1980 to serve as the umbrella civic association for the other civic clubs within Boulevard Oaks. In the 2001 edition of the BOCA newsletter, they describe their organization as:

The Boulevard Oaks Civic Association was formed in 1980 to serve as the civic association for the area bordered by the Southwest Freeway, Bissonnet, Morningside, and Graustark Parkway. Over the years BOCA's reputation grew and so did its boundaries. BOCA is now comprised of 20 subdivisions.

A typical neighborhood in Houston has 500 households that are bound by the one common set of deed restrictions. However, the area within Boulevard Oaks was developed over a period of 20 years, and 17 small deed restricted areas emerged. These neighborhoods range from Broadacres, an area of 20 stately mansions with a neighborhood assessment system, to deed restricted areas of as few as four residences. As a result, until 1980 the area had no common identity as a neighborhood and no effective civic organization.

Project Background. The project began on a small scale. It was begun as a weekend project of sorts. A man named Carroll Shaddock moved to the neighborhood in the 1970s. At this time, using his own money and muscle, he planted his own street with

‘street trees’ on the public rights-of-way. After this planting, he realized that there was an original diamond-shaped planting pattern of street trees throughout the neighborhood that was steadily being lost. Shaddock knew that restoring this grid of trees would transform the street dramatically, improving it aesthetically and ultimately raising property values. He did some informal fundraising among his neighbors and asked who wanted a tree. As a result of this initial effort, he was able to plant 50 trees on his block.

The money collection was not formally organized; originally, residents would randomly donate to his cause. He was able to get donations of up to \$250. With the donations, Shaddock would purchase and then plant five gallon trees in the yards of those who wanted them. Shaddock, alone, would do the watering and pruning of the trees he planted. Eventually, he moved to another area of the neighborhood and did the same thing. Ultimately, he founded the Trees for Boulevard Oaks Committee which was adopted as a project of BOCA, allowing it to grow as other residents became involved.

Trees for Boulevard Oaks picked up where Shaddock left off. They wanted to restore the original, geometric planting patterns of street trees throughout the neighborhood. To determine where trees were needed, residents began by mapping the existing street trees and identifying holes in the pattern. After the mapping, it was determined that a total of 2,300 street trees were required to create a perfect pattern. Of that number, 1,200 trees were in place, and 1,100 needed to be planted.

To restore the pattern, Trees for Boulevard Oaks planted all the east/west streets first, beginning with the worst-looking streets first. Trees for Boulevard Oaks started with the major thoroughfares, realizing that everyone would benefit from the trees

planted on the busiest streets. After planting the east/west streets, they filled in on the north and south streets. They continue to repeat this process as they lose trees.

Project Goal. The original goal presented to BOCA by Carroll Shaddock was to replant the neighborhood's street trees and restore the original diamond-shaped pattern. He gained unanimous approval. Dedicated volunteers planted 1,100 trees. Once all these trees were systematically planted, the goal changed slightly. Trees for Boulevard Oaks found they had to begin replacing some trees that were seventy years old or older as they died or were removed by city crews because they were considered dangerous. Therefore, their goals have slightly evolved to replace dying trees, fill in missing trees, and maintain what they have.

Trees for Boulevard Oaks' Year. Each fall, Trees for Boulevard Oaks sends out letters to every resident in the neighborhood in order to get ready to plant by the beginning of January. These letters are created by the members of Trees for Boulevard Oaks and mailed on the members' own stationary with no reimbursement. The letters inform the residents that it is fall-winter tree planting time again (fig. 6). Residents are asked to order a tree if they want a street tree, or they may simply make a donation to the tree fund if they do not want a tree. In the past, the volunteers for Trees for Houston would send out notices to the neighborhood's residents asking who wanted a tree. About twenty people a year would respond saying they wanted a tree. Now the residents are asked to contact Trees for Boulevard Oaks by a certain date if they do not want a tree. Unless Trees for Houston hears otherwise, everyone gets a tree. This approach gets many more trees in the ground. Postcards and fliers are mailed out several times a year. It was discovered that every year people would say that they were never contacted and that they

did not want a tree planted. Multiple mailings can help reduce the number of upset neighbors.

Residents make checks payable to Trees for Houston Inc., the city's nonprofit urban forestry organization. Trees for Houston is a 501c3; therefore, the checks are fully tax-deductible. The suggested regular donation is \$25 per household. There are four different levels or 'Other'. Trees for Boulevard Oaks submits planting lists⁴ to Trees for Houston which then forwards the lists to their tree contractor.

To prepare the planting sites, Trees for Boulevard Oaks contacts the Trees for Houston stump grinding contractor to remove any stumps that are in the way. The stump grinder sends the bill to Trees for Houston, and the amount is deducted from Trees for Boulevard Oaks' tree account. Depending on who ordered a tree, the tree committee will then mark the exact planting locations with paint.⁵ The contractor for Trees for Houston comes and plants the trees. The contractor calls members of the tree committee with questions, and he will meet with a committee member on site. The members must be very hands-on because they are trying to squeeze trees into a cramped urban setting, dealing with sprinkler systems, drain systems, homeowners, etc. They have found that the neighbors seem happier to allow them to plant when the committee members are with them every step of the way.

In her own words, Evalyn Krudy describes Trees for Boulevard Oaks year:

...Okay, so in September we do a drive-through of the whole neighborhood, and we assess where we've lost trees, where they've been cut down or where we've

⁴ Depending on where they live in the neighborhood, residents can either choose from a list of trees or are required to plant a specific species. To maintain the consistency of the diamond-shaped planting pattern, which only remains in certain portions of the neighborhood, residents in those areas are asked to order only that particular species. In the other parts of the neighborhood this planting pattern was never established so neighbors choose from a list of native trees available for planting.

⁵ They previously used survey-type flags, which were often stolen.

got stumps, or where people have moved and we can finally plant. We've got a list of where they've denied permission in the past. We go by and see if it's a new owner, and if it is, we contact them and ask if we can plant. And that takes a while. We send out our solicitation, usually the first of November, to raise our money, and we do that so people can honor people with a tree donation before the year ends. The money comes in, and we go through in the beginning of January and mark our sites where they have given us permission to plant. We will then come out and mark locations. We say, 'There's a location marked, let us know if it's okay to plant there.' We used to put flags out, but little kids would pull them out of the ground so now we use contractor's orange paint. We put a big circle, and we really try to saturate it. We type up our list. We send it to Trees for Houston. If there's a stump that needs to be ground, we make arrangements for that. They grind the stump and haul it away. We usually have our list submitted by January 15th. Lately, they have been planting in March, which is really to our chagrin so we are trying to figure out how we can do it sooner. We think we are going to site the trees before January so we can get them planted earlier. Winter is the planting season. In summer we take a break and just do the watering every other day if it's dry.

Technical Assistance. Trees for Boulevard Oaks works closely with Houston's nonprofit urban forestry organization, Trees for Houston. All checks from the neighborhood's residents are made out to Trees for Houston. Trees for Boulevard Oaks keeps its money with Trees for Houston and uses their contractors. As services are rendered, Trees for Houston takes money from the account to pay their contractors. Over the years, Trees for Houston has educated members of Trees for Boulevard Oaks and has made suggestions for appropriate species. Trees for Houston also trains neighborhood volunteers to do the necessary tree pruning.

Education. The committee distributes door hangers about watering, fertilizing, and mulching as soon as the tree is planted. If it is particularly dry, they will send out watering letters and emergency watering instructions. Newsletters about various issues affecting tree health are distributed. Multiple page letters about preventing damage to trees are mailed to all residents to help keep their tree population healthy.

Tree Inventory. Although a resident has been working on an inventory so far, they have not really needed a tree inventory. Driving around the neighborhood to see where the holes are has been sufficient to tell them where a tree is needed.

Maintenance. In the summer, the top maintenance priority is watering. When I asked Evalyn how they watered their new trees, she replied simply, “We have big buckets in the back of Wallace Hooker’s pickup truck and big scoops that are made from cut-off milk jugs.” They try to get one to two gallons to each new tree every other day during the hot months from June through September. During a dry summer three to four volunteers spend about two and a half hours every other day scooping water onto the bases of the young trees.

Photographs.



Fig. 10 In the photograph large live oaks grow in both the center esplanade and in the right of way. The smaller trees, in both places, were planted by Trees for Boulevard Oaks.



Fig. 11 Live oaks line the public rights of way on this street corner. The trees are maintained by Trees for Boulevard Oaks.



Fig. 12 These live oak trees, growing in the heart of Boulevard Oaks, exhibit why trees are so important to the neighborhood.

Lessons learned. (1) Stick with your plan even though you may encounter some opposition. (2) The project became successful when the organization sent letters stating that they were planting and that residents needed to call with any objections by a certain deadlines. Many more trees were planted this way than were planted at the beginning when residents were asked to call if they wanted a tree.

Contacts for further information. Evalyn Krudy (713) 807-1787.

Archival research (e.g. project records, newsletters, etc.)

October 27, 2003

Re: Year 2003 – 2004 Tree Planting and Protecting Your Existing Trees

Dear Southampton Neighbors:

1. PLANT A TREE

The fall-winter tree planting season is under way. Conditions will be ideal in January for planting, so please consider donating to this year's campaign. You have two ways to give:

- a) if you would like a street tree planted between the sidewalk and curb in front of your home, or in any other specific place, identify the type and size tree on the enclosed form; or
- b) if you prefer a general gift, donate to the tree fund and we will apply the funds to general neighborhood tree planting.

We are all beneficiaries of the legacy left by past tree campaigns. Even the comparatively recent plantings of the 1980s now shade large areas of the neighborhood, which total far in excess of 500 of Southampton's street trees. Folklore to the contrary, even live oaks grow surprisingly fast in this neighborhood. There is no need to think of fine trees as legacies benefiting only your children. Indeed, the care, water and fertilizing most residents expend on their front yards can be relied upon to transform an unimposing 6- to 8-foot deciduous oak tree into a grand 25-foot specimen in only ten years.

In addition to individual gifts, should you and/or your immediate neighbors wish to organize a block planting or any other ambitious project, please give me a call at 713-528-1936 or send me an email at hkelly@houston.rr.com. In the meantime, you might find the following information about tree care useful for preserving your existing trees.

2. TAKE CARE OF THE TREES YOU ALREADY HAVE

Trees, like people, are not that delicate. But a tree, like a human, has vulnerabilities. A tree can be as seriously threatened by an automatic ditch digging machine, a bulldozer, a gardening tiller or a foundation digger as a human being faced with a knife or gun. These devices can sever a tree's vital links of roots to crown, or can smother its roots, with disastrous results. The fatal effect of these mistakes are not well known because the consequences are masked by the slow decline that typifies the death of a tree.

To learn more about preserving your trees from these hazards, please read and save "Is This the Year You Will Kill Your Trees?" enclosed.

Yours truly,

Hugh Rice Kelly

Fig. 13 This newsletter was sent out to every household in Boulevard Oaks to inform residents about ordering a tree, making a donation, and caring for existing trees.

December 14, 2002

Dear Boulevard Oaks Resident:

It's time again for our annual tree planting. We encourage every Boulevard Oaks resident to make a tax-deductible donation for this vital neighborhood endeavor. Or consider making a contribution in honor of the person-who-has-everything on your holiday gift-giving list. Honorary and memorial plaques are also available.

Over the past 19 years, **Trees for Boulevard Oaks**, in conjunction with **Trees for Houston**, has raised over \$135,000 for the planting of over 1250 trees in the esplanades and rights-of-way throughout our neighborhood. Each winter we have systematically planted every street in Boulevard Oaks according to the *Tree Plan* to complete our inventory of 2300 street trees. 2001 marked the completion of the first pass at planting all BOCA streets.

But our work is far from over. We are entering the more challenging phase of replacing our street trees as they come to the end of their life spans. This trend will increase since street trees live an average of only 70 years, and most of our mature trees were planted between 70 and 80 years ago. In the past few years we have lost an average of 25 trees annually. This year we must replant 45 trees. In addition, we hope to complete planting on Bissonnet Street between Mandell and Kirby, and along the Southwest Freeway between Kirby and Hazard.

Those of you with beautiful and healthy trees in front of your homes may be wondering why you should help pay for trees planted a block or more away. The reason is simple: our street trees belong to all of us. They are enjoyed by everyone traveling through the neighborhood whether driving, walking, or biking. Their uniform spacing and species creates a streetscape unlike any other neighborhood in Houston. Think of our program as an insurance policy with tax benefits. If some day you, or one of your neighbors, is unable to replace declined street trees, the BOCA Tree fund will be here for you.

We hope you will support our program with a tax-deductible contribution. If you have a specific need for a street tree, and/or a stump removal, please indicate this on the reply form and your contribution will be used accordingly: \$150 buys a 15-gallon tree and \$300 buys a 30-gallon tree. Please return the reply form on the back of this letter along with your contribution in the envelope provided. Please call the BOCA office at 713-528-2622 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Trees for Boulevard Oaks Committee

Fig. 14 The newsletter on this and the next two pages was sent out in Boulevard Oaks to notify residents that it was time to order their tree or make a donation to Trees for Boulevard Oaks.

TREES FOR BOULEVARD OAKS
2002/2003 STREET TREE PLANTING CAMPAIGN

Name: _____
(as you would like to be listed in the BOCA newsletter)

Address: _____

General Fund	Specific Planting
_____ \$ 25(Regular)	_____ \$150+ (15 gal.)
_____ \$50 (Sustaining)	_____ \$300+ (30 gal.)
_____ \$100(Patron)	(65 gal. & 100 gal. trees also available)

Stump removal

Location: _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Enclosed is \$ _____ payable to *Trees for Houston, Inc. / B.O.C.A.*

Apply payment to _____ General BOCA Tree Fund _____ Specific request

Send receipt for tax year _____ 2002 _____ 2003

Does your employer have a matching funds program? Yes _____ No _____
(If yes, please include paperwork)

TRIBUTES

If this is a gift, memorial or tribute and you wish Trees for Houston to notify the beneficiary, please write in the beneficiary's name and address below:

Name: _____

Address: _____

If you wish to purchase a **tribute plaque** call 713-840-8733 to request an order form. Tribute Plaques are \$75.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Please list other instructions, if any, in the space below. Include your phone number or email address in case we have any questions for you.

Donations are fully tax-deductible!

Fig. 14, cont.

January 29, 2004

(NAME)
(#) (STREET)
(CITY,STATE ZIP)

Dear Boulevard Oaks Neighbor:

Trees for Boulevard Oaks is a project of the Boulevard Oaks Civic Association (BOCA) working in conjunction with Trees for Houston whose goal is to replenish, maintain, and extend the original street tree pattern in our neighborhood. **This year neighborhood contributions will be used to plant trees in front of your home.**

In the next few weeks, we will plant (Quantity) (Species) in front of your home between the sidewalk and the curb, at no cost to you. **If you do not want trees planted in the easement adjacent to your property please call the BOCA office at 713-528-2622 by Monday, February 9, 2004.** Clearly state your name and address and why you are calling. Unless we hear from you by Monday, February 9th, trees will be planted.

We will be planting 15-gallon trees that are approximately 6 to 8 feet tall. Our program purchases the trees with funds raised from the neighborhood at a cost of \$150 each. Trees are guaranteed for one year. If you would like to have larger trees planted please call me at 713-807-1787. If you have not already done so, please consider making a contribution to this important neighborhood program. Donation forms can be found on the BOCA website at www.boulevardoaks.org.

Sincerely,

Evalyn Krudy
BOCA Tree Committee

Fig. 14, cont.

5.2 An Interview with a Trees for Boulevard Oaks Administrator and Member

Narrator: Evalyn Krudy

9 June 2004 [Date of Interview]

Interviewer: Ann Allen

Transcriber: Ann Allen

Krudy: ...Some places it was so far gone that we just completely started over. I believe a few of the streets that we will be driving down had elms or ashes, and those are all short-lived trees so those are all gone, and we've replaced them with deciduous oaks for a reason. We raise all of our funds through Trees for Houston, which is a nonprofit urban forestry organization here in Houston. They [Trees for Houston] were actually founded by our founder. His name is Carroll Shaddock, and he moved into Southampton in the seventies and planted his street. He realized there was an original pattern here, and we were losing it and this was terrible. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we looked like the beautiful houses down in Broadacres? Wouldn't that transform this street dramatically and improve property values? So, he said, 'Do you want to give some money, neighbors? I'm planting trees on such and such a day, let me know if you *don't* want one?' He planted maybe 50 trees on his whole block, and then he moved to another part of the neighborhood and did the same thing. He moved to Southampton and started the tree committee of Southampton over here. So he's the Johnny Appleseed of trees. This phenomenon in Houston of planting street trees is his doing with a few other attorneys that were friends of his that saw the value in it, and it has just grown; it has just mushroomed.

Krudy: ...Who could say that in this hot climate, trees are not our salvation? We have such poor drainage in this ancient neighborhood, which used to be the boonies. We are an urban neighborhood now, but we used to be outside the city limits when we were

developed. We were five miles from the city limits. It looks pretty densely populated now, but the infrastructure was never replaced to deal with the demands; so, consequently, anytime it rains hard like it did the other day, there is all kind of street flooding, and trees just soak it up like nothing else. I think Houston is in a really bad situation because we just keep concreting everything. We have no zoning and our building regulations are so lax you can concrete the whole damn city. So what does that do? It forces everything to overland flow to the bayous and then the bayous get backed up and the Med Center gets backed up. So, hopefully, that's going to get changed. We just had this street redone, and we put new storm sewers through here. That's all going to tie into two gigantic 15' x 15' box culverts from U.S. Hwy 59 all the way down to the bayou. During tropical storm Allison, all of these houses were under water. There was four feet of water on this street right here.

Krudy: This is it.

Allen: This is the street with the original plantings?

Krudy: Yes. Okay, wherever you see a tree that is the same size is where they allowed him [Carroll Shaddock] to plant. Now, here he could have done one [tree] but this person didn't want it at the time. This was back in 1972. So that would make these trees 32 years old.

Allen: So we assume that all these people [houses lacking trees] did not want trees at the time?

Krudy: Yes. I think he got donations up to about \$250. He said he just planted little five-gallon trees. That's a tiny tree.

Allen: Did he tell you what he did, at that time, to keep them alive?

Krudy: Well, he's so "Type A" that he was there, and he admits to having overplanted this street. He was always out there pruning or doing something. So this little area is Southampton Extension. This is not my neighborhood. You can see how there are some of the original trees left, but some of them, well, there are a lot of holes. So, frankly, Southampton and Boulevard Oaks were not looking this good when I moved here in the mid 80s. This street is in pretty good shape. You can see the mixture. You've got elms; you've got crape myrtles; you've got more crape myrtles. Willow oaks. Magnolias. It's not bad, but it certainly doesn't have the same character that we have over here.

Krudy: Okay, check out all these trees. The first thing--we all planted, and we did this together. Boulevard Oaks and Southampton really did work together on planting the major thoroughfares because we thought everyone benefits from these streets. You benefit, yourself, from whatever is in front of your house but everyone benefits from passing through here. So wherever there wasn't an obstruction, we were able to plant. Five years ago we planted all of these in a row and that really blocks off this commercial look and keeps it separate from the neighborhood. Look down there; all those trees were planted in the last 20 years.

Allen: Do you have a master plan or some type of plan on paper?

Krudy: A lot of live oaks were planted. Not because we like live oaks so much but because they will thrive in really nasty conditions where there's lots of cement. A live oak will live where no other tree will live. So on the major thoroughfares they are always getting torn up; the roots are getting hit. That one has been hit by a bus.

Okay this is Rice Boulevard; this is the southern boundary of Southampton. Now originally these trees were planted, I'm pretty sure, they were on 35' to 40' centers. That has had to change a little bit over time. When we go refill where a hole has developed, if someone planted the wrong tree in there or let's say there's a root obstruction or they just didn't know at the time that you could plant in the same location--now we've found a group that will deep grind the stumps so we can plant in the same location. We prefer to keep that 40' on center pattern, but it's been lost to some extent.

We are about to turn. This is the boundary for Southampton. Now both Boulevard Oaks and Southampton realize the value in making sure the surrounding area is good so there's a partnership with Rice. Whenever a tree dies on their campus, we are there saying, 'Do we need to order the tree or are you taking care of it this year?'

Here are some little trees. We had asked that they be willow oaks to match the existing line that starts here that had been here originally. The homeowners revolted once this little development had been built--see these townhouses? There was this gorgeous row of perfect willow oaks here. The townhouse construction crew--see the sidewalk and the driveways? The trees were in the way of the construction. They kept coming in the middle of the night and cutting down the trees, and we'd catch them in the morning. They got fined but short of just paying a few hundred dollars into the tree fund for the city, that was that. The homeowners just decided that willow oaks would be terrible because their limbs would break and smash their cars, but willow oaks don't do that until they are 65 plus years old. These are eighty years old here. We can't say you can only plant so and so, but we try to. We try to keep it consistent. Down here at the end of the block you can see what we've done. For instance, to continue the willow oak

theme, we planted this willow oak. It looks like this one died on us this year; hopefully, we'll come back and redo that one. Here are two more. Here are two more, here's another one. This is part of Boulevard Oaks; it's almost completely a rental street. Everyone here is transient so they don't take care of things the way we have success in other areas.

Allen: Who is taking care of these trees and watering them?

Krudy: We do our committee volunteer work. Now, this person owns this house, and they live on-site because they've been watering these trees. This is part of the Catholic Student Center; it's housing for a bunch of Franciscan Fathers or something like that. We come by and check on everything.

Allen: How do you water the new trees?

Krudy: We have big buckets in the back of Wallace Hooker's pickup truck and big scoops that are made from cut-off milk jugs. Our grower says the best way to water them is a gallon or two gallons every other day during the hot months from June through September, so that's what we do when we have a dry spell.

Allen: That's a lot of work.

Krudy: It's a butt-load of work. We've had so much rain so we have not had to do a lot of watering at all [this summer].

Allen: So in a bad summer it could take...

Krudy: Two years ago we had no rain for months. It was definitely a lot of exercise, about two to two and one-half hours every other day with three or four volunteers. We weren't as faithful as we should have been. We stretched it to maybe three days apart and gave them three gallons and just prayed that that was going to work.

We didn't lose too many trees that year though, which was really great. Now this is part of this year's planting.

Allen: Do you do the mulching and staking?

Krudy: No, Trees for Houston's contractor does. We collect the money, and it's made out to Trees for Houston/Southampton. They put it in a separate account for us and then we get out to plant as many trees as we can with that money or do whatever we need to do, maintenance-wise. For instance, if we do a stump groundout which we did there a couple of years ago; that costs us \$200 to grind it up and haul away the clippings and then we planted the tree for like \$150. So it was \$350. Now that's a lot of money; you could get it cheaper somewhere else but because it's tax-deductible we do it that way. Here's Mark Davis; he sends us a check for \$150; he writes it off his taxes, and he gets a great tree in front of his house. So it really ends up being a great deal.

Allen: Who actually plants the tree and gets it into the ground?

Krudy: Whomever Trees for Houston is contracting with.

Now the reason we planted here--I want to show you this--look at what we have to deal with here. See these power lines; we do not like power lines. Next to billboards, they are the ugliest thing in the world. The live oaks, since they are a spreading oak, will grow up around them. The power company will cut a V out of the tree, but from the ground you don't see the V you just see the canopy.

I don't mean to be confusing things by going from Southampton to Boulevard Oaks but here's the key difference. In Boulevard Oaks, everything is one species per street for the most part. Here [Southampton] they started off that way; there was originally one species

per street. Like on this street, probably whatever this tree is. Do you know what this tree is?

Allen: I believe that's a cedar elm.

Krudy: Yes, that's right. Well, some streets were definitely planted in one species in the seventies. You would drive through here, and it looked like a new development in Sugarland because there were so many trees that were gone. So they allowed people to select their own species of trees from a list. These trees were planted last year. I think we were crazy, and we did burr oaks here. We have a line of burr oaks. If it is a corner house, we try to be consistent. Otherwise, we took a fast growing deciduous elm and threw it in the ground. We'll plant live oaks wherever they want them in Southampton. These are all in the last ten years. On the cross streets, live oaks are okay but everywhere else... In Southampton the setbacks are a lot narrower so they're like 20' to 25'; whereas, in Boulevard Oaks we have a lot more space, so taller trees work better here.

Allen: Did you have to abandon the idea of planting all one species to reproduce the original design?

Krudy: Everyone seemed to like the diversity and ability to choose what they wanted in front of their own house in Southampton and everyone wanted the order and structure in Boulevard Oaks. So they went in two different directions.

We normally would say if you want a tree let us know, and we'd have like 20 hits a year and then two years ago, we said, 'We've got this huge pile of money in this tree fund, so let's spend it.' So we did the Boulevard Oaks scheme, which is, 'Hey, we're planting your street this year. If you don't want a tree, call us by such and such date or you will get a tree.'

Allen: Do you get that message out with fliers?

Krudy: Mailings and postcards, and it's good to hit people a couple of times because every year we have people who say, 'I didn't want a tree and no one told me.' Even though we have letters stamped in red, 'Important! Please open immediately! A tree will be planted!'

Allen: What are some of the reasons you get for not wanting a tree?

Krudy: Oh, write down this name Meyer Mention. We'll go drive by Meyer Mention's house.

It's really phenomenal because it's pretty densely treed in here. There are very few locations left. We did the south side of the neighborhood to Sunset. Old Braeswood, which I manage, started a tree program two years ago, and they've done some little projects where they planted Kirby Drive. They planted some trees on the major thoroughfare of Green Briar, and they finally started going into the neighborhood, but it was developed in a real River Oaks Country Club kind of way without sidewalks. It's all arching streets with a tree here and a tree there, and it seems to not lend itself to orderly street tree patterns. So that was a little more challenging, but where we did put in a street with an orderly pattern, I think it will work when they grow. Right now, it looks a little silly.

Allen: Do you do pruning and maintenance of your larger trees? Is that included in your budget?

Krudy: No, in Southampton it's not... here's Sunset Boulevard. This is not the best example; we've lost so many trees from people building houses. I'll take you by a block where we've lost most of the trees. With lots of redevelopment, these old

bungalows are falling; people are putting up big new houses. That's why were so hot on, 'Don't kill your trees.'

Allen: Does Houston have a tree ordinance?

Krudy: Yes, we finally have a tree protection ordinance as of 2000. You cannot remove a tree that's in the public right-of-way so it's just from the inside edge of the sidewalk out to the street of certain species. I think you can remove trash tree species, but anything over 10" in diameter requires a permit even if it is a trash tree. So that was great because we had developers coming in cut down everything. Now, there is some recourse. Some are still doing it like that horrible townhouse developer.

You can tell we came in here a few years ago and really did the whole street.

Allen: Did you use the same tactic in which you sent out fliers warning about tree plantings and if you don't want a tree speak now?

Krudy: With a letter. The block captain got real energetic on this particular street and said, 'Lets really plant this street,' and he got people's permission. Now, they didn't have to pay for it; the funds were raised by the entire neighborhood.

Allen: So each block has a captain.

Krudy: Yes, but not all of them are equal. Some of the captains are more equal than others.

Okay, this is a good street to show you. This is the dividing line between the single family Southampton and the duplex, quadraplex.

Allen: So tell me more about Carroll Shaddock. After he planted the original street, what happened next?

Krudy: A few years later he moved. He moved to Courtland. So Carroll went on to found the Trees for Houston. People said, "Let's just do this all over Houston." So that's why you see all the trees you do. So he raised money to plant on the main thoroughfare.

Okay, this is one of the first projects. This is the first 1982 project for Southamptton and Boulevard Oaks together. There was a threat. They [the city] were going to come through and widen this street. They figured if trees were on it they wouldn't (widen the street).

Allen: So you don't do the actual tree planting? The grower plants the trees?

Krudy: Right, we don't get dirty. I've seen some great programs where you go out and hand dig on a Saturday and those are neat, but this is more of a forestation project not a tree-planting program.

This is Broadacres. This is a part of Boulevard Oaks. Boulevard Oaks is made up of more than twenty-two subdivisions that were developed piecemeal over a 50-year period. Some of them have as few as thirty or forty houses and some are up in the hundreds. It's so densely forested in here that when a tree goes and, we've had a few, like there's one, that's a recent planting. There's just not that much room for that little tree next to that. That was planted a few years ago. That was a 65-gallon tree planted about four or five years ago.

Allen: These are all planted on a grid?

Krudy: Look at it; it's a perfect diagonal diamond pattern in here. We were able to maintain the diamond pattern here. We're about to enter Edgemont where we've still got some of the diamond pattern going on. Okay, now, there had been trees in this

esplanade and Edgemont; this is what we're coming up on, but most of them were trash trees and they died. The Houston Zoo had a major landscaping overhaul back in 1970, and they were donating plants. So the neighborhood said, 'Oh, we'll take that palm and we'll take this and that.' They even took hackberries and a whole lot of crape myrtles and stuck them in this esplanade. Now, we were able to convince them to remove a lot of the junk, and all of these trees that are the same species; the live oaks were planted in a diamond pattern. See one, two, three; so it makes like a number five on a dice throughout. There's, of course, an original tree. We've got a few trees they will not let us remove. Here's a tallow. I mean it's pretty magnificent, and it's beautiful in the fall so they want us to just let it die a natural death before we come in and fill in the pattern.

Now, here is where they went ahead and took care of live oaks that were in their yard. There is just no room to plant so we didn't waste the money. Okay and here we've got hackberries which grew up in between the branches of a crape myrtle, and the people who live here were like, 'No, we like the tree; leave it.' But this is the right location for even spacing for a live oak tree. So, we are trying slowly to extend the pattern of the trees as we go. This next block did not take the plants from the zoo so I think it looks a lot better. I think this one really turned out nicely.

Okay, as far as people who don't want trees, let us show you the poster child of people who don't want trees.

Allen: I noticed this house earlier.

Krudy: Did you notice the twenty thousand placards all over it? This is the most colorful man in all of Houston. His name is Meyer Mention(?), and he was a fighter pilot in World War II. He lived with his mother when he came back from the war and never

stopped, and when she died he took over the house, and he's the grand dame. Anyway, Meyer is Jewish and Meyer is a little off center, and he is convinced that the Nazis are going to come back; and he wants to see them when they come. He's got a bomb shelter. I hear he's got a collection of AK-47s, and he's going to blow away anybody in a Krause helmet. He is afraid. And I'm told he has a gun collection that can just blow them away.

Allen: So that's why he doesn't want trees; he's afraid they would cut his visibilities of the incoming Nazis?

Krudy: Seriously, he thinks he's going to be bombed, and I think he's got a tommy gun set up in one of these windows. But look at this. Now, these people tore down a beautiful old house that looked very much like all the other traditional ones. When they tore it down, the trees were all dead, and we hadn't gotten far in our tree-planting program. They had put in these trees, which are, of course, taking away all the light and air from the street trees, and it's a real shame. They did let us plant the trees in the front; they are not doing well. They didn't want anything on the side because they like their little landscaping plan. So, we've left it alone. We don't want to make enemies out of planting trees but... We figure eventually people will come around. And when people who have said no in the past move, new people come in, and they're like, 'Yah, give me a tree!'

Krudy: Okay, does this street look a little more closely spaced? I mean the diamond pattern is not here as much. They went through the esplanade and planted them close. This is Carroll's house and when he moved here, he wasn't sure what he wanted to do, so he planted the water oaks in front of the house. Now, he realized after making a mistake in this esplanade that he wasn't going to do that to the rest of the neighborhood.

But Carroll has planted every native species of tree indigenous to Texas in his front yard. I think he's got like 60 trees. He doesn't have to mow his yard. Look at the nice little forested area. This was the first block we ever did, and we figured things out. We needed the diamond pattern where we could get it.

Krudy: This is North and South Boulevard. Everything is originally live oaks so we've maintained the live oaks, but a little further north where they've totally lost what was there, we started over again.

Allen: After Carroll planted his street, how did you prioritize what got planted when?

Krudy: We planted all the east/west first. We chose the worst street first. Whoever needed it most got it. So it was this street. Look, these are all the same size so there were no trees on this block at all, and all the people on this street were real supportive of the project; they gave lots of money so we were able to finish the entire street, and I can't even tell you how many trees are here but it looks like 80 to 100 on this one block. What we did was we did a path through the whole neighborhood. As we got more money, we finished Milford where they let us plant. The farther west we went, the less amenable people were to having trees planted for some reason. I think also in the seventies the neighborhood was, I wouldn't call it burned out, but it definitely didn't look as good as it does now, and it didn't have the high property values that it currently has. A lot of it was rundown and in rentals. There was a pass through east and west. We did all the east/west [streets]; then we came in again and filled in on the north and south streets; then we just kept repeating that process. But at this point, we have so many trees in the ground we just plant where we lose a tree.

Krudy: Now this is Ranch Estates. Ranch Estates is part Boulevard Oaks, but it never had a pattern. We came through and said, 'You don't have a street tree pattern and a street tree pattern probably wouldn't work out here so if you want a tree we'll plant one, here's your list of twenty trees, just tell us what you want. There's no even spacing; it's just wherever. Because for the Trees for Houston rules they have to be in the public right of way or on the edge, so they are a little closer to the streets than you might want otherwise.

Krudy: I just want you to see the mishmash of little subdivisions that are all tacked together here. You've got these two blocks of Ranch Estates here. Now this is Vassar Place, one block, forty houses, and it's got fabulous live oaks. They've had an active civic association for the last seventy years, and so everything didn't go to hell.

Allen: Were these original trees, these seventy plus year old trees, planted by the original developer?

Krudy: The developer put them in to Edgemont and Broadacres. There were so many different developers of the rest of the twenty neighborhoods in Boulevard Oaks that... Oh, and Southampton was planted, by the developer at the time, but this whole area, I don't think it was ever planted and whoever bought the house just stuck a tree in if they wanted to. So we have a few older trees but almost all of these are...

Krudy: I'll tell you, these little houses that are by these huge oaks trees are half what someone else would have.

Allen: How much does a typical household donate to the tree fund?

Krudy: We have suggested a regular donation of \$25. There are four different levels. We send it out every fall and try to get ready to plant by the beginning of January. We tend to plant later than we should.

Allen: Where does the money go once it's been collected?

Krudy: We receive it in the mail and it's made out to Trees for Houston. We photocopy it so they don't cheat us. (laughs) Trees for Houston lets us do whatever, as long as it's on the right-of-way and we are beautifying the city. I mean our guide was their [Trees for Houston] founder and still serves on the board of directors.

Allen: When did this program and the tree plantings start?

Krudy: 1982. This started in 1982 with than one block of South Boulevard and Bissonet, and then in 1983 we did that one block of Milford. Each year when we lose a tree on one of these major thoroughfares, we replace it that same year.

Allen: Do you fertilize the trees?

Krudy: No, we don't go that far. We do pruning the first five years.

Allen: Who does the actual pruning?

Krudy: Volunteers who were trained in the Trees for Houston program.

Allen: I can't believe how many trees you have put in the ground. It is amazing.

Krudy: Over 1350 in Boulevard Oaks proper.

Allen: Does the City of Houston recognize your work in any way?

Krudy: We have a very close relationship with city forestry. They love us. They get more calls from us than from any other neighborhood in town. Rather, it's, 'Someone is cutting down a tree.' Or 'A tree has been hit by lightning; come take it down.'

Allen: But the city doesn't do any pruning?

Krudy: No, when we get a complaint like a limb obstructing a view at an intersection, we send a volunteer out with a chain saw. It's just too expensive to hire somebody, but in Edgemont and Broadacres they do have a contract with a tree company to prune their tree annually. The residents of those neighborhoods all pay \$1200 a year and that goes for maintaining the tennis courts, mowing the park at the end of the street, mowing the esplanades, and tree pruning.

Allen: Are there different funds for the different neighborhoods within Boulevard Oaks?

Krudy: Yes.

Krudy: I don't know why we didn't take before and after pictures.

Allen: How many trees have you planted this year?

Krudy: This year in Southampton we planted about 70ish trees, and in Boulevard Oaks we planted about 40.

Krudy: ...Okay, so in September we do a drive-through of the whole neighborhood, and we assess where we've lost trees, where they've been cut down, where we've got stumps, or where people have moved and we can finally plant. We've got a list of where they've denied permission in the past. We go by and see if it's a new owner, and if it is, we contact them and ask if we can plant. I've given you the permission letter. And that takes a while. We send out our solicitation, usually the first of November to raise our money, and we do that so people can honor people with a tree donation instead of a Christmas gift or make a tax deduction before the year ends. The money comes in and we go through in the beginning of January and mark our sites,

where they have given us permission to plant. We will then come out and mark locations. We say 'There's a location marked; let us know if it's okay to plant there.' We used to put flags but little kids would pull them out of the ground so now we use contractor's orange paint. We put a big circle and we really try to saturate it. We type up our list. We send it into Trees for Houston. If there's a stump that needs to be ground we make arrangements for that. They grind the stump and haul it away. We usually have our list submitted by January 15. Lately, they have not been planting until March, which is really to our chagrin so we are trying to figure out how we can do it sooner. We think we are going to site the trees before January so we can get them planted earlier, because winter is the planting season. In summer, we take a break and just do the watering every other day if it's dry.

Krudy: In this area of town we have more walkers and joggers than any other area of Houston because you can come here and run at noon and you're in the shade. So even in the summer when it's one hundred degrees and ninety percent humidity, you can come and walk, and it's tolerable.

Allen: Do other neighborhoods come to you looking for advice about how to begin their own tree programs?

Krudy: Yes, but a lot of them just want to do the volunteers and have the seedlings, but the seedlings get mown over. Unless you're going to plant at least a 5-gallon tree; I just don't think your chances of survival are very good.

Allen: What size do you plant now?

Krudy: The smallest we plant is a 15-gallon. Some people individually have planted 5-gallon, and they come off okay. But if you get a good 15-gallon tree with a single stalk that has been pruned properly while it's been growing, they really do well.

Allen: Did all the developments in these neighborhoods have trees planted originally?

Krudy: Yes, they all had some mix of different species.

Krudy: There had been some tree planting efforts but they've been like, 'Let us know if you want a tree and we'll come out plant you a tree.' As opposed to the, 'Okay, we are planting trees.' The 'we are planting trees approach' gives you results. The 'You've got to respond to give us permission' doesn't. People don't respond because they think they'll have to send us a check and maybe they can't send us one right now. And they don't realize that even though we give them to them totally free with no obligation. They don't believe it.

Krudy: (When asked about a particular neighborhood that has largely declined planting offers.) It's just a different thought process. So many of these are widows, who are in their nineties and think, 'I've never had trees. I don't want trees because I don't want to rake the leaves.' So many people are afraid of raking leaves with these little bitty trees. With a tree like that it's like, 'Honey, you'll be lucky if you're alive when that tree puts leaves on your yard.' You can't really say that to them.

Allen: Do you come back and continue to apply mulch after the initial planting?

Krudy: They get their initial mulching and then that's it; then the homeowner has to do it.

Allen: Do you distribute some type of literature about watering and caring for the tree?

Krudy: They get a door hanger about watering, fertilizing, and mulching as soon as the tree is planted. If it's particularly dry, we will send out watering letters and emergency watering instructions. Our main problem with watering is elderly people who can't get out there to water.

Allen: Tell me about the early days of Trees for Houston.

Krudy: He (Carroll Shaddock) planted his street and then moved to Southampton and sold it to the board of directors. The Southampton civic club did a comprehensive planting and that was really when it started. When that was successful for about a year, they founded Trees for Houston the nonprofit that goes and does all the major thoroughfares and connector streets in Houston.

Allen: Did you ever do a tree inventory.

Krudy: We started one and a woman named Laura Wilson is still working on it. What's really sad is that Trees for Houston commissioned one but they ran out of money. I don't know if we really need a tree inventory. Just driving around each year and seeing where the holes are tells us, 'We've got lots of trees and we're missing ten.'

CHAPTER 6: INMAN PARK TREE WATCH

6.1 Full Case Study of Inman Park Tree Watch

The information presented in this case study was gathered through several means, including an interview with Richard Westrick and Nancy Morrison (the program's creators), a questionnaire, a tour of the neighborhood of Inman Park, and communications via internet with Richard Westrick and Nancy Morrison.

Project Name. Inman Park Tree Watch

Location. Atlanta, Georgia in the neighborhood of Inman Park, two miles east of downtown Atlanta

Date Created. 2001

Progress to Date. Tree Watch has planted over 250 trees in the last four years.

Date Completed. Ongoing. The tree canopy that Tree Watch has established will retain its beauty for several more generations. Nancy said, "This is a project for our grandchildren."

Neighborhood History. The Battle of Atlanta moved through the land which is now Inman Park. After the Union and Confederate Armies moved through the area, there were no trees left standing. In 1890, fifteen years after the Battle of Atlanta, the area's first house was constructed in what was to become Atlanta's first suburb. During the early 1900's, the neighborhood started to decline for a variety of reasons. For example, the Victorian architecture became outdated and the mass transit trolley line could take commuters to more distant suburbs being developed north of the city. Over time, the large Victorian houses of Inman Park became the property of absentee landlords, and the neighborhood fell into a state of neglect.

Inman Park Neighborhood Association (IPNA). In 1968, a man named Robert Griggs drove through the neighborhood and saw a fantastic old house. He stopped, went in, and fell in love with it. He bought the house and moved in. His friends began to follow his lead. In 1970 and 1971, this group of concerned neighbors chartered what was then called Inman Park Restoration, Inc., now known as the Inman Park Neighborhood Association. The association's work restoring both the houses and the neighborhood has been going on for forty years. Today, Inman Park is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The major money maker for the neighborhood association and the neighborhood's unifying force is the festival held each spring on the last weekend in April. The festival began in 1972. To raise money, the neighborhood association organizes the outdoor festival with one-hundred street vendors, one-hundred arts and crafts vendors, and two sounds stages with music going all day Saturday and Sunday. On Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, fifteen to twenty houses in the neighborhood open their doors for the home tour. Approximately 100,000 people come to the neighborhood for the festival each year. The money raised comes from the sale of home tour tickets and from the food vendors. Money is charged for food vendor booth space, arts and crafts, and the street market. The festival has attracted sponsorships which are increasing each year.

The work of the Inman Park Neighborhood Association and its subcommittees are funded by the spring festival. One of the association's subcommittees is the Beautification Committee (BC), from which Tree Watch was created. Tree Watch, however, does not use IPNA's money; it is completely self-sufficient.

Project Background. There was a group of people within the Beautification Committee who felt it necessary to create a subcommittee to deal with the neighborhood's dying trees; this subcommittee became Tree Watch. When Inman Park was developed in the 1890's, the neighborhood's trees were densely planted with oaks, hickories, tulip poplars, and other native and nonnative trees. Now, over one hundred years later, the trees are nearing the end of their life spans. Inman Park is losing more and more of these trees every year to storms and drought.

The members of Tree Watch decided that their first thrust would be reforestation. After that, they plan to focus on maintenance of both the mature and the newly-planted trees. They also work to make corrections to tree planting mistakes made in the past. For example, they are currently working to replace a large planting of Bradford pears with trident maples, a species more appropriate for that particular spot. Initially, their tree planting work began with plantings in the public rights-of-way and other public spaces throughout the neighborhood. Once they ran out of planting space in these areas, they began their second planting phase, moving on to the private property and anywhere else trees could be planted.

Project Goal. Reforestation. Their goal is to maintain and replenish their neighborhood's tree canopy before it is completely lost. This is a common goal for all who work on the committee. The goal has remained constant for the life of the committee.

Financial: From the beginning, the committee members planned for Tree Watch to be self-supporting. Initially, they received some funding from the neighborhood association. Trees are planted in public and private spaces. The trees planted on private property are

paid for by the homeowner desiring a tree in his yard. Tree Watch purchases their trees at a discounted rate through Trees Atlanta, the city's nonprofit urban forestry organization. Trees Atlanta obtains the trees at a discount from growers so that Tree Watch can then pass the discount on to homeowners. The smaller trees are marked up \$15.00 from cost to cover expenses. The larger trees are sold at a fifty percent discount.

The trees planted on public property are paid for by money raised at the annual Tree Huggers' Ball which is a dance and silent auction. There is no admission fee, but they accept donations at the door. They also make profits from beer and wine sold at the ball. In 2003, the ball raised \$5,000.00.

Tree Watch keeps all the money raised from the ball and donations in the organization Friends of Inman Park. This nonprofit organization, a 503-C, is a spin-off of the neighborhood association, created to generate charitable donations.

Inman Park Tree Watch's Year. Tree Watch has a major winter tree planting and then another planting in the fall. The committee members of Tree Watch meet the second Tuesday of each month except during the summer to plan for these plantings and for the Tree Huggers' Ball. One of their original concerns was people who were given trees would not maintain them. It was felt that if people pay for a tree, they have a vested interest in watering and caring for it to insure its survival. For this reason, all trees planted on private property are paid for by the homeowner requesting a tree.

Tree orders are solicited from homeowners starting in November for the February planting. People wanting a tree send in their checks with their orders to the person designated in the IPNA newsletter. Checks are made out to Friends of Inman Park, the neighborhood's charitable organization. A neighborhood resident and member of Tree

Watch is employed by Trees Atlanta. This person handles ordering the trees. Trees Atlanta prefers to have the orders about three weeks in advance to make sure the desired trees are available. If the tree is unavailable, Tree Watch will call the homeowner and offer alternative trees. The fall planting is carried out the same way.

Leading up to the two plantings, trees are offered for sale and come with a free planting. Tree Watch does not have its own newsletter; therefore, announcements and advertising for the tree plantings and the fundraising Tree Huggers' Ball are published in the neighborhood association's monthly newsletter. About 1,200 to 1,400 newsletters are distributed each month. In the newsletter, neighborhood residents are provided with a list of small and large trees available to order.

When trying to choose a tree, Tree Watch offers advice to each interested neighbor so that the perfect tree is ordered for each spot. Height and root space considerations are taken into account. Ideally, Tree Watch meets with the homeowners when they receive their orders. Sometimes the meeting happens later, depending on personal schedules. A Trees Atlanta employee happens to live in Inman Park, and Tree Watch uses this resource to help homeowners choose the right tree. The volunteer will come to each person's yard to make sure it is the right tree for the right spot conditions.

Members of Tree Watch, as well as other neighborhood volunteers and volunteers from Trees Atlanta, do the actual plantings. Most of the time, the homeowners will help plant their own new tree. At each tree planting, they plant approximately fifty trees with about fifty volunteers assisting with the planting work.

Most of the trees planted are in five-gallon containers, making the trees about four to five feet tall. The larger trees are in twenty-five-gallon containers. These trees are

eight to ten feet tall and require about three people to move them. People from the neighborhood with trucks volunteer to do much of the tree transporting.

Technical Assistance. Tree Watch receives technical assistance from Trees Atlanta. Trees Atlanta helps them each year during periods of drought by providing Tree Watch with a watering truck. Trees Atlanta also helps supply the volunteer labor from area schools and colleges on planting days and other work days. Trees Atlanta has always advised Tree Watch during species selection to insure that the appropriate tree species are planted. They also provide trees at cost for Tree Watch's plantings.

Unique Constraints. The neighborhood's tree-planting spaces in the public rights-of-way are narrow, and Tree Watch has had to become cognizant of how wide the trees will become when they mature and of how a particular species will handle the cramped root space. Overhead utility lines require Tree Watch to consider the ultimate height of the tree species they are planting.

Tree Inventory. When Tree Watch began, they quickly partnered with Arboguard, an arborilogical company in Atlanta. Arboguard distributed data sheets to Tree Watch. The data sheets were designed to survey each tree in the neighborhood to establish a working inventory of the neighborhood's trees. The data sheets were compiled in a database by Arboguard and given back to Tree Watch. This is the base from which they work. Originally, they had planned to keep the database updated, but over the years, this has not happened.

Maintenance. After the trees are planted, it is, for the most part, up to the homeowners to ensure that their trees survive. Tree Watch does organize several low-branch pruning

days each year to keep sidewalks and streets clear. On these days, volunteers will walk up and down the streets of Inman Park making the appropriate pruning cuts.

During times of drought, the trees in the public spaces are watered using water from the fire hydrants with no cost involved. During such times, Trees Atlanta allows Tree Watch to use their water truck. Trees Atlanta has a fire hydrant key which they can use to fill the water tank on the truck. The truck has a long hose and a pump, allowing Tree Watch volunteers to water trees up to seventy-five feet away from the truck. If the trees are too far away, volunteers fill five-gallon buckets and carry them by hand to each tree. If they are not using the truck, they have a faucet that attaches into the fire hydrant, allowing them to fill their buckets directly. Richard Westrick admits, “It can be pretty back-breaking!”

Photographs.



Fig. 15 In this picture are some of the street trees planted by Inman Park Tree Watch.



Fig. 16 In this picture is a redbud and dogwood planted at a private residence by Inman Park Tree Watch.



Fig. 17. This photograph shows street trees planted in the public right of way.

Lessons Learned. (1) Do not choose trees that are emotionally satisfying but not native. They will not survive; (2) Do not assume that everyone wants trees in his yard. Some people do not; (3) As in any volunteer project, maintaining enthusiasm over time is crucial; (4) Do not try to do too much at once. Two to three hours of digging, planting, and mulching is enough to keep people coming back the next time; (5) Two major planting days a year seems to work well, with about fifty trees being planted each time; (6) Do not burn people out on the job. When they want to do something else, accept what they have done with gratitude and get someone else.

Contacts for Further Information. Richard Westrick and Nancy Morrison can be contacted through Inman Park's website, www.inmanpark.org

Archival Research (e.g. project records, newsletters, etc.)

6.2 An Interview with Inman Park Tree Watch Founders

Narrators: Richard Westrick and Nancy Morrison

Interviewer: Ann Allen

Transcriber: Ann Allen

23 June 2004 [Date of Interview]

Allen: Before Nancy gets here, could you tell me a little bit about your neighborhood association?

Westrick: Back in 1968, a man named Robert Griggs drove through the neighborhood. He saw a fantastic old house, stopped, and went in. It was a rooming house. He fell in love with it, and he bought it. Then some of his friends started coming in. In 1970 or 1971, they chartered what was then called Inman Park Restoration, and it became the neighborhood association. They came up with the butterfly symbol because they wanted to be able to identify each other from all the slums because the neighborhood has gone down pretty badly.

Allen: I was wondering about that because most of the houses look like they never were allowed to deteriorate.

Westrick: We've been working on it for forty years. The major unifying force in the neighborhood is our spring festival every year when we have about 100,000 people coming through here. It's the last weekend in April, and we have one-hundred street market vendors and one-hundred arts and crafts vendors. We have two sound stages with music going all day Saturday and Sunday. The house tour goes on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. We usually have somewhere between fifteen and twenty houses on tour.

Allen: Is there a charge to get into the festival or the home tour?

Westrick: Home tour only. The food vendors charge. We make the money by charging for booth space from the street market and the arts and crafts vendors, and we charge the food vendors. We get sponsorships which have gone up dramatically in the last five years.

Allen: How old is the festival?

Westrick: 1972.

Allen: Is that the main fundraiser?

Westrick: Yes, for the neighborhood.

Allen: So Tree Watch would not use any of that money?

Westrick: Tree Watch is entirely self-funded. We do our own fundraising, and so far, we've been doing pretty well. Tree Watch is the name of the committee, and those of us who saw the need were also on the Beautification Committee (BC). We formed ourselves as a subcommittee of the Beautification Committee. Since we're all on both committees, we work hand in hand.

Allen: What did the Beautification committee recognize as a catalyst for creating Tree Watch?

Westrick: Trees were dying.

Allen: What is the job of the BC?

Westrick: The BC has changed over the years. Right now, we have several decorative areas at various entrances to the neighborhood that the BC has created and maintains, both on land that has been donated to us and on land that has been abandoned which we just took it over. So the BC works on that. We also have a landscaping service that takes care of a lot of things the city should be doing like weed-eating and mowing

along several of the streets that are main thoroughfares, but the city never gets to it. So, we pay to have that done. We maintain the little park over here and the lake. We just budgeted \$5,000.00 to put in an aeration system because the lake was growing stagnant, but the BC created the lake again. It was an original feature, and it had been filled in back in the fifties with a lot of junk cars and dirt. So the BC paid, a couple of years ago, for that to be all dug out and the spring regenerated and also to have the well put in to augment the flow. So the BC has adopted the park from the city, and they do nothing but mow. We do all the irrigation, all the planting, and all the maintenance of the trees, bushes, and the lake. The BC was formed, initially, to beautify the neighborhood. At first, they worked to get dead cars towed out of driveways and out of the streets because there were a lot of them around. They gradually moved into more of a garden club type of thing.

Allen: Had the original developer of this neighborhood planted trees?

Westrick: The Battle of Atlanta moved through here. I'll show you a picture of this house when it was built; there were no trees anywhere. It was built in 1890, which was fifteen years after the Battle of Atlanta. After the Union and Confederate armies moved through here, there were no trees left standing. It was just a naked plain. It was owned by Joel Hurt's cousin, Elizabeth--hence Elizabeth Street. It was her family farm. He bought it from her and built the first suburb of Atlanta to feed his trolley car line. He owned a trolley car line out to Edgewood Avenue. Two blocks down and to the right is the old trolley car barn where they used to service the trolleys. They started the development in 1886, I think.

Allen: Did the park go in with the original development?

Westrick: Yes. Like I said, trees were starting to die, and we realized we were losing a whole lot of trees. The trees were all the same age because they all grew up after the Civil War. So we're talking probably an average of one-hundred or one-hundred ten years on the big trees.

Allen: What species were those original trees?

Westrick: Native oaks, hickories, tulip poplars. Joel Hurt did a lot planting along the streets. We have a lot of live oaks. This is really inland and north for live oaks, so they don't really thrive. We're studying about how to keep them alive. We actually had a giant sequoia. It was the eastern-most giant sequoia in the United States. It died, but there are children coming up. Anyway, we saw the trees were dying. I don't remember whose idea it was, but we decided that our first thrust would be reforestation before it became absolutely necessary.

Allen: Do you plant trees only in the public rights-of-way?

Westrick: We started with that. We've run out of space so we've moved out of that phase into yards--anywhere.

Allen: So people [homeowners] let you do that?

Westrick: Well, what we do is we offer trees for sale and free planting. We offer them for sale at a reduced rate. We get them through Trees Atlanta since they get them at a discount from their growers. We pass that discount on. The smaller trees we pass straight through. On the larger trees, we give a fifty-percent discount and retain the rest of it. Actually, we don't pass it straight through on the smaller trees; we add on \$15.00 to pay for expenses. Twice a year we have a tree planting. We advertise it in the neighborhood newsletter and over email, and people send in their orders. Then we go out

and look at where they want to plant them, and we offer advice as to what kind of tree they should plant because there are power lines overhead. You don't want to plant something that's going to grow one-hundred feet tall. So, we offer advice on location and what type of tree.

Allen: So tell me about planting day. Are orders taken that day as well?

Westrick: We have planting day at the end of January or first of February, and we cut off orders in early December. We'll start advertising for the planting day in September, because Trees Atlanta has to know how many trees to order and what kind so there's some lead time.

Allen: How do you handle going to people's homes and helping them pick an appropriate spot for a tree?

Westrick: Volunteers. Knowledgeable volunteers.

Allen: Did the volunteers go through some type of education--through Trees Atlanta maybe?

Westrick: A little bit. There are two people in the neighborhood. One of them works for Trees Atlanta and the other has been a volunteer with Trees Atlanta for, probably, fifteen years and is very knowledgeable. They generally handle that. I need to start tagging along with them and learning more.

Allen: If someone wanted to buy a tree, whom would they contact?

Westrick: We would designate somebody and say, 'Contact so and so' and then get a check to her.

Allen: Who is responsible for planting the tree?

Westrick: We are. We generally plant around fifty trees and have about fifty people show up. The people buying trees will help. They are not required to, but they usually do.

Allen: They will help plant someone else's tree?

Westrick: No. I mean they will dig their own hole.

Allen: What size trees do you plant?

Westrick: Most are five-gallon trees, which is about four to five feet tall. The larger ones are twenty-five-gallon trees, which can be up to eight to ten feet tall and require three people to move.

Allen: Does that mean that someone with a truck will volunteer to move them?

Westrick: Yes.

Allen: How is the money raised to buy the trees?

Westrick: We do a Tree Huggers' Ball. We hold it down at the Trolley Barn, and there are not admissions fees. We accept donations at the door. We sell beer and wine, and we have a silent auction. This past year was our fourth year and we cleared \$5,000.00 on it.

Allen: Can I get back to the neighborhood association? How many people living in Inman Park are members of the neighborhood association?

Westrick: Actual members--probably about three-hundred households. We hand out between 1,200 and 1,400 newsletters every month. Tree Watch does not have a publication of its own. We piggyback on the neighborhood association for that. There are probably about 1,300 people in the neighborhood and about three-hundred households

are active in the neighborhood association. At the festival, we had just a tremendous outpouring of volunteers from people who don't do anything else.

Allen: What are the neighborhood association dues?

Westrick: Ten dollars a year per person, and everything else comes from the festival.

Allen: Have you ever asked for help from your state urban forester?

Westrick: We haven't had to yet, and it's a good thing because it's not available.

The city has cut the arborist's staff down to two people for the whole city, and they have no money to give to anyone for forestry. I doubt we could get anything from the state.

We are self-funded.

Allen: For the general maintenance of the neighborhood's trees, as well as plantings of trees on the neighborhood's public property, do you spend your Tree Watch money and time on those things? Do you spend money to have dead and dangerous trees removed, for example?

Westrick: For planting, we pick open spots, but as far as the dead trees, that's the one thing the city will do. If there's a danger, and we identify the danger they will come and take it down. Before our last arborist left the city, she came out and walked the neighborhood with us twice and wrote up a ton of work orders, but they won't do anything cosmetic.

Allen: Before you had the Tree Huggers' Ball, how did you raise money for the trees?

Westrick: It was strictly through sales. We sold the trees to people, got the money from them, and then we bought the trees from Trees Atlanta.

Allen: So the homeowner had to be willing to pay for the tree?

Westrick: Absolutely. That was part of our philosophy, that if we gave it to them they might not maintain it. If they pay for it, they have a vested interest in watering. We've never done any kind of grants. We haven't needed to.

Allen: After you plant the tree, is it up to the homeowner to care for the tree, keep it watered, etc?

Westrick: We come around and do pruning if it is on the street. We don't come up into people's yards unless they ask for it. We do have a couple of pruning days each year where we just walk up the streets. When we started, the first thing we did was partner with a company called Arborguard. They came out and gave us data sheets. We went out and surveyed every tree in the neighborhood. They compiled all of that into a database and gave it all back to us. It's our base that we are working from.

Allen: Do you update it?

Westrick: Not like I should, no.

Allen: Is it basically a survey of what's where?

Morrison: It surveys the tree health from a rating of one to five. It indicates what kind of tree it may be. Even before that, Arborguard came and did a whole day training with the neighborhood on what a tree watch program is and what could it do. They took us out and trained us about the fungi, how to check the bark, how to take your stick and check for hollow spaces. They gave us a very basic "Trees 101". Then they divided us into teams to go out and do the survey. It seems like so long ago. It really made everybody enthusiastic and ready. We were gung-ho.

Allen: Is Arborguard a commercial company?

Westrick: Yes.

Allen: Did you pay Arborguard or did they volunteer their time?

Morrison: It was good PR and community service for them. They have done it with other areas of town. They thought it was a good thing to do to give back to the community.

Westrick: When we get into maintenance which, hopefully, we will be getting into later this summer, I'll be going to them.

Allen: Will the money you use to pay Arborguard come from the Tree Huggers' Ball?

Westrick: Yes.

Allen: What kind of maintenance will you get them to do? I assume work will only be done on the trees growing on public property?

Westrick: Yes. It will be taking down limbs that aren't dangerous yet but should come down. There's one tree a couple of blocks away that leans, and there's a limb that's way out over the street. The tree is fine; so we will balance the tree.

Morrison: There's also stump grinding. As the trees come down, the city may get back to you in a year or two years.

Westrick: They have two stump grinders, and one is always dead.

Allen: How often do you use your tree inventory?

Westrick: Not often. I am not organized, and I don't really have the time to be more organized on this.

Allen: Do you need it?

Westrick: Not really.

Morrison: It has been useful because one of our members has volunteered to be the liason between the city and neighborhood concerning the trees. He keeps tabs on those hazardous trees that either haven't come down or are marked to come down. Then any new problems neighbors identify, he's their point person. So he can look on the survey and make sure of the trees that have been identified.

Allen: Who do people contact if they have a tree issue like that?

Morrison: They would contact him or Richard or me because we are listed as the Tree Watch co-people.

Allen: What are both of your responsibilities?

Morrison: I'm going to answer this way. What we did was when this first started five years ago, we were by default the co-chairs. By "default," I mean no one was stepping forward to take over beautification. Trees evolved from our BC. Richard and I were brainstorming and came up with all of this. The first couple of years, I took more of an active lead with the planning part of it. Richard took more of a role in the actual plantings. That's how we naturally divvied it up. In the last year, we sat down and decided that Richard now has more of a lead role, overall. He leads the meetings. Sometimes he will write the article for the *Advocator* on what's going on, sending out reminders of when our next meeting is. Sometimes he'll do it, or sometimes I'll do it. We try to meet on the second Tuesday of each month. We're on summer vacation right now.

Allen: What goes on at the monthly Tree Watch meetings?

Westrick: We talk about planning for the tree plantings and the Tree Huggers' Ball.

Morrison: We talk about any new things that people have come up with. We have two Trees Atlanta people on the committee who live in the neighborhood, and that has been a big boon to us. For example, we can talk about a hot new tree. One of the interesting things for us is trying to find a good street tree that won't grow up to the power lines. Trident maples were found by Trees Atlanta to be good street trees. We planted a ton of trident maples, but you don't want to overplant. They are really good, and they educate us. They tell us when it's time to switch gears. It is a lot of work planning the major winter planting, and we do a fall planting. We have two plantings, the Tree Huggers' Ball, and intermittent prunings.

Westrick: Fortunately, we have a couple of really driven people who take that [Tree Huggers' Ball] and run with it.

Allen: Who holds Tree Watch's money?

Westrick: There is a spin-off organization called Friends of Inman Park, and it was created to try to generate charitable donations. It's a 503-C. We keep all our money in Friends of Inman Park which allows us to accept charitable donations. We haven't gotten anything massive yet, but who knows? It's also nice because within INPA, if the money is in the general fund and isn't spent, it rolls back in. We retain it year after year. We say we need X number of dollars, and they cut a check.

Allen: What are some of the mistakes you have made along the way?

Morrison: A couple of years before Tree Watch was Tree Watch, a bunch of Bradford pears were planted unknowingly.

Allen: Were they planted by residents or by the overall neighborhood?

Morrison: For the last twenty to Twenty-five years, there's always been some sort of tree effort in the neighborhood, even before Tree Watch jelled.

Westrick: There was a time in the seventies when it was thought that Bradford pears were the salvation of the urban environment. That was before they knew that they'd split.

Morrison: That's another thing. We do have special projects. We'll pick a site. Across from the Trolley Barn on Edgewood there was a long strip of Bradford pears. Georgia Power wanted to get rid of them because they were growing up into their power lines. We wanted to get rid of them because we wanted to put good trees in there. So we partnered with Georgia Power to take down the Bradfords. They took them down and ground the stumps. Then we came in with Trees Atlanta and replanted the strip. We still have another block and a half to go, and we will be doing that this fall. For the portion of this project that is left, Georgia Power will not be grinding the stumps. They will take down the trees and haul them off. We will have to pay for the grinding.

Allen: What are you planting there?

Morrison: Tridents. The strip we did three years ago looks really good because it is now being maintained by the Trolley Barn Board. They have done some different plantings.

Westrick: The only thing I don't like about it is that we are using all the same tree, but we are restricted by the power lines. If we were to put in hickories or oaks, they would have to get chopped.

Allen: What would Tree Watch be able to do if there were no Trees Atlanta?

Westrick: It would be really difficult because we use their knowledge; we use their contacts, their sources. They have contracts with growers all around who are growing trees for them, and they can go out and decide with those folks which trees are ready to be planted. It would be really hard to do this without their assistance.

Morrison: None of us is a tree expert at all. We don't have an arborist. We are just amateur tree people.

CHAPTER 7: THE COMPONENTS TO CONSIDER FOR THE CREATION AND LONG-TERM SUCCESS OF A NEIGHBORHOOD URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM

Before conducting the case studies, I was boggled down by, what I consider to be, all the details that would factor into establishing an urban forestry program for one's neighborhood. During the interviews, I wanted to know the specific aspect of each step they had taken while developing and running their program. But while analyzing each case study the same themes began to surface as the primary elements of a neighborhood urban forestry program. These components are the core of any neighborhood urban forestry program, everything else is just a detail that will work itself out and vary depending on the neighborhood. Once these primary components are thought through and dealt with, the other details will fall into place. The components are as follows: the passionate visionary, the neighborhood itself, the project goal, the available resources and technical assistance, and the appropriate means of funding.

7.1 The Passionate Visionary

There is one component more necessary than all the others in terms of the success of a neighborhood urban forestry program – the passionate visionary. More crucial than the land on which to plant the tree is the patient, passionate, persistent, and hardworking visionary. Without someone to recognize a need in their neighborhood's urban forest, to dream the dream, and create the program, and carry through with it nothing would happen at all. In each of the case studies presented in this thesis, there is a person or a group of people who established a program and continue to keep it running year after

year. Without this person, it would be extremely difficult or impossible to create and carry through with a project of this scope.

Because the visionaries are not planting trees in their yards alone, but throughout the entire neighborhood, they must accept the challenges of working with a sizable group of people. The visionaries must believe strongly in the project because there will be many obstacles, small and large, that they will have to negotiate.

People are constantly moving in and out of neighborhoods. This is particularly true in neighborhoods that are made up primarily of rental properties. As neighborhood residents come and go, there must be ongoing attempts to educate and reeducate them about the project and its goals, notification of ways neighbors can participate and contribute, and information about the proper way to treat newly planted trees. This requires the people on the committee to personally visit as many homes as possible or keep a constant flow of newsletters going into the neighborhood's homes. For example, Cliff Riggs, the co-creator of the Central High Neighborhood Urban Forestry Program, keeps a regular supply of publications about the project in his car so that he is always prepared to make impromptu stops to notify anyone new to the neighborhood.

In the case of the Central High neighborhood in Little Rock, many of the residents are low income families. A large proportion of the families rent and may not think of the trees in their yards as their own. For these families, the least of their worries is the neighborhood's tree population. The co-founders of the program, Cliff Riggs and Ethel Ambrose, recognize this, but they have not let it become a setback. They remain persistent in their attempts to educate and to provide opportunities for participation. Each

year families move out of the neighborhood, and new families move in; and each time Riggs and Ambrose will start the process all over again.

For Trees for Boulevard Oaks in Houston, this is considered an opportunity. Each year, as orders are taken for new trees, there are a handful of homeowners who never want a tree planted in their front yards. For whatever reason, they prefer their yard to be devoid of any trees. If this homeowner should move from the neighborhood, Trees for Boulevard Oaks wastes no time in reaching out to the new homeowner, educating them about their project, and getting a tree ordered and in the ground.

Persistence takes on an entirely different meaning when one is dealing with living organisms that need water in the middle of a drought during the summer months. In the three programs studied in this thesis, each of them hand water their trees throughout the summer to insure that the new trees receive the water required for survival. Several members of Trees for Boulevard Oaks spend two and half hours twice a week carrying two buckets of water to each new tree.

The visionaries also need to possess patience. Trees grow slowly and a percentage of all the trees planted are damaged or killed each year by vandalism or negligence. The projects' intended outcomes will not necessarily benefit the creators. For the most part, much of their work will benefit the generations to come. In all three case study interviews, this concept was clearly expressed. Everyone had a sense that they were doing this, not for themselves, but for future generations and for the overall health of the environment.

7.2 The Neighborhood Itself

The character of the neighborhood will, to a great extent, determine the ease with which the project is carried out. The three factors that dramatically affect how the project evolves are the income levels of the neighborhood's residents, the existence of some sort of neighborhood association, and the way in which the neighbors interact or feel a sense of community. Among neighborhoods, these factors will vary and fluctuate. While one neighborhood may have adequate money, they may not be closely knit. In contrast, an extremely closely knit neighborhood that communicates frequently may have few financial resources.

Obviously, the greater the incomes of the neighborhood's residents, the more money individuals can invest in this cause. Of the three neighborhoods I studied, Little Rock's Central High neighborhood is predominantly lower income; Atlanta's Inman Park is primarily middle class; and Boulevard Oaks in Houston is upper-middle class to affluent. Each of the neighborhood's urban forestry group raises money in a slightly different way.

Before a group decides how their program will be financed, it must first determine how much money the residents have at their disposal to invest in their neighborhood's trees. To some extent, the age and education levels of the neighborhood residents will affect the amount of money they are willing and able to give. In general, the younger the residents and the higher their level of education, the more they will value the presence of trees in their neighborhood and the more money they will be willing to donate. Evalyn Krudy, of Trees for Boulevard Oaks, noted in our interview that a portion of the neighborhood contains a large number of widows, in their eighties and nineties, who rarely order trees and decline offers for free tree plantings. She explained, "It's just a

different thought process. So many of these widows think, ‘I have never had trees in my yard, and I don’t want trees because I don’t want to rake the leaves’.”

When planning an urban forestry program, it is important to understand who lives in the neighborhood. What types of things are important to them? Are they receptive to learning about new concepts like urban forestry and other environmental issues? Do they enjoy interacting with other people in the neighborhood and see themselves as part of a community, or do they prefer to keep to themselves? How much of their incomes can they donate to increase the number of trees and to maintain the health of those trees? If questions like these can be answered, it will make it easier to decide how money should be raised and how much people can be expected to support the program over the years.

The Central High Urban Forestry Program uses their neighborhood’s low income level to their advantage by applying for Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grants from their state’s Forestry Department. The residents do not have large disposable incomes and, therefore, are not able to donate money to the urban forestry program. Instead of relying on neighborhood money, the program looks elsewhere for funds. The amount of neighborhood money they receive is much lower than the amounts raised in-house by Inman Park Tree Watch and Trees for Boulevard Oaks. Central High is a very different neighborhood from these other two. Because the amount of money they receive from grants is less than what the other neighborhoods’ fundraising efforts generate, Central High Urban Forestry Program moves at a slower rate, and, therefore, they are not able to get as many trees planted each year.

Central High does not put as many trees into the ground each year, but they spend much more time and money in community outreach and education. This is why it is

important to determine who lives in a given neighborhood and what is important to those residents. Many of the people who live in the Central High neighborhood are lower income and, typically, have lower education levels. For this reason, the Central High Neighborhood Urban Forestry Program splits its time and money between tree plantings and education of the neighborhood's residents. They feel it would be wasteful to only plant trees, while neglecting the opportunity to educate people who normally do not have much exposure to ideas about the significance of environmental problems and solutions to those problems. They also acknowledge that these are the same people who are ultimately responsible for the trees' survival. Likewise the committee's members place an emphasis on the neighborhood's young people. They acknowledge that they are the future community leaders and stewards of the earth--the people who could ultimately be the initiators of other urban forestry programs.

The Inman Park neighborhood is made up of residents who, economically, are mostly middle class and highly educated. Since the neighborhood has spent the last twenty years in a self-motivated revitalization, the neighbors are used to working together for a common cause. Throughout the year, they come together to support one cause or another. A sense of community is very important to the people who live in this neighborhood. Because the residents of this area are used to working and playing together in the context of their neighborhood, the fundraiser that works best for them is the Tree Huggers' Ball, which is a night of eating, drinking, and dancing with entertainment provided by local bands.

Because the people of this neighborhood tend to be highly-educated, they understand the environmental and aesthetic value of trees to the environment. Unlike the Central

High program, Inman Park Tree Watch does not have to spend as much time and money on education practices that stress *why* trees should be planted. Any education they do is, for the most part, focused on *how* trees should be planted. Inman chooses to aim their efforts primarily on reforestation.

Nevertheless, it is important to understand, that just because education levels are high, does not mean that people understand what it takes to keep a tree healthy and what can ultimately kill it. In the Boulevard Oaks neighborhood, like other neighborhoods throughout the country, many houses are being bought, torn down, and completely rebuilt. This makes for extensive construction activity in the neighborhood. In the last several years, Boulevard Oaks has recognized construction as the number one cause of tree mortality in their neighborhood. Therefore, even though residents there are both affluent and highly educated, Trees for Boulevard Oaks must spend significant time every year educating people about the effects of construction on tree roots. They do their best to warn people about what construction can do before the damage is already done.

All neighborhoods are on their own individual tracks and the people who live in the neighborhood have different values and concerns. It is crucial to understand these details before getting started in order to know where to concentrate their efforts.

7.3 The Project Goal

In the three case study programs, each project's goal was in response to a declining tree population. For the trees in the neighborhoods of Inman Park and Boulevard Oaks, the decline had occurred over a period of years. In the case of Central High, a particularly violent, overnight storm caused severe damage to the neighborhood's trees.

The damage caused several residents in the neighborhood to take a closer look at their tree population.

To some extent, the success of each of these neighborhood programs can be attributed to the fact that, while defining their project's general goals in the early stages, they did not get bogged down with the specifics. When defining their goals, the neighborhoods did not try to define specific details that they wanted to change. They kept their goals broad, tackling each problem head-on. Again, the goal of each neighborhood program is:

Central High Neighborhood Urban Forestry Program: To reestablish the neighborhood's tree canopy.

Trees for Boulevard Oaks: To replant the neighborhood's street trees and restore the original diamond-shaped street tree pattern. Once that was completed, the goal evolved to replace dying trees, fill in missing trees, and maintain the trees they have.

Inman Park Tree Watch: To reforest the neighborhood and to maintain and replenish the neighborhood's tree canopy before it is lost.

Originally, the Central High Neighborhood Urban Forestry Program had defined its goals too specifically to be successfully accomplished. Originally, the program sought to create a forest in their neighborhood's public rights-of-way. In these three feet wide strips of earth, they wanted to establish a forest with hardwood deciduous trees like oaks and hickories. Growing below these trees would be flowering understory trees such as dogwoods and redbuds. They also foresaw flowering perennials under the smaller trees. While this would have been beautiful, it quickly became apparent that these plans were too ambitious. Just getting a small number of trees planted and sustained each year was difficult enough. Trying to establish a forest in the rights-of-way of the neighborhood's

streets was too much to tackle at the beginning. Making the goal broad and simple from the onset keeps the project's ultimate intent within reach during the entire life of the program.

In the case of Trees for Boulevard Oaks, as they began to achieve their initial goal of restoring the neighborhood's original diamond-shaped street tree pattern, they shifted the program's goal to maintenance of what they had. They now plant new trees as older ones die.

Because an urban forestry program deals with living organisms in the ever-changing urban environment, its work is never done. By keeping the goals broad, it is easier to allow the program to evolve as it reaches milestones, accomplishes goals, and faces new challenges as they arise.

7.4 The Available Resources and Technical Assistance

Once a neighborhood group has recognized the needs of their urban forest and taken a realistic look at the neighborhood to determine the proper ways to remedy these problems, it is likely that it is going to need some outside advice. Guidance from a professional will not only keep the project on track, but it can also eliminate many problems before they start. Each case study group relies on the assistance of at least one group from outside the neighborhood to help it reach its goals. This professional advice results in the proper tree species being planted in the appropriate locations, trees being correctly planted and maintained, and education to ensure that residents know how to care for their trees in the future.

When the creators of the Central High program began their work, they quickly learned that Little Rock did not have a nonprofit urban forestry organization or a

municipal urban forester to help guide them. Therefore, they sought the assistance of the city horticulturist who put them in touch with a private arborist who, then, inventoried existing trees and determined proper tree species to plant throughout the neighborhood. Subsequently, the program has worked with the Arkansas Forestry Commission to both finance and guide their project.

For each of the three programs, planting trees is not the only task required to develop and sustain a healthy urban forestry. Annual pruning and tree removal are also necessary for a healthy tree canopy. Technical assistance is crucial to help guide this aspect. A professional can help a program determine the pruning, fertilization, and other maintenance that should be done before the actual planting begins. The professional will also assist in establishing the proper ratio of planting to maintenance that should be completed each year. So that the neighborhood can do much of its own pruning and other maintenance, a professional can come to the neighborhood and teach these techniques to the residents.

Many large cities have nonprofit urban forestry organizations that are established to help various entities in their cities care for their urban forests. Both Trees for Boulevard Oaks and Inman Park Tree Watch rely on their own city's nonprofit urban forestry organization for guidance. Trees for Boulevard Oaks works with Trees for Houston, and Inman Park Tree Watch works with Trees Atlanta.

Trees for Houston provides an array of services for the Boulevards Oaks program. Throughout the year, Trees for Houston contracts various work for Trees for Boulevard Oaks. They provide stump grinding, while also providing the arborists to do the large-scale tree work. Trees for Houston also assists in the compilation lists of appropriate tree

species to plant in the area. Because Trees for Houston is a nonprofit, it is able to hold money belonging to Trees for Boulevard Oaks and to purchase trees at cost. When ordering trees, neighborhood residents make their checks out to Trees for Houston.

Inman Park Tree Watch works with Trees Atlanta in much the same way. They also enlisted the help of a private arborilogical company. This company helped Inman Park create an inventory of their neighborhood trees in return for using them to do their tree work in the future.

Whether or not a city has an urban forestry nonprofit organization or a municipal arborist, there are groups set up at the state and federal levels to help determine urban forestry goals and the proper methods for reaching them. In any city the ‘green industry’ is a relatively closely knit community of professionals. Assistance is available and can be found by inquiring within such a network of professionals.

7.5 The Appropriate Means of Funding

Some neighborhoods have more money to spend on tree projects than others. An affluent neighborhood will obviously have more disposable income than an impoverished neighborhood. Fortunately, it is not the income level of a neighborhood that will make a program successful. It is the people running the project who will ultimately determine its success. As stated earlier in this chapter, understanding who lives in the neighborhood and knowing what those neighbors are capable of contributing, both financially and emotionally, will help identify the proper means to accomplish a program’s goals.

Two factors determine how a neighborhood funds an urban forestry program. The income level of the residents in the neighborhood will be the major factor that determines how much money people can be expected to donate every year. Also, where

a program is doing the actual planting within the neighborhood will determine how people donate. For example, if the program is planting trees in individual front yards and taking orders from the individual households each year, it would make sense that people requesting a tree pay for their own tree. On the other hand, if the program is planting in a public space like a park or an esplanade, yearly donations at various levels would be more appropriate.

In Boulevard Oaks, the income level is particularly high. Therefore, Trees for Boulevard Oaks takes orders and payments from those requesting trees, as well as, yearly donations from all participants. This leaves the organization with extra money most years. The money accumulates until it is time to implement a mass planting or carry out a large maintenance project.

The Central High Neighborhood Urban Forestry Program cannot rely on residents to pay for a tree or make an annual donation. Therefore, the program administrators write grants and fund their projects with grant money. The grants dictate exactly how the money should be spent and where the trees can be planted.

Trees for Inman Park takes orders twice a year for trees to be planted in resident's front yards. Those requesting a tree or trees pay for what they order. Additionally, Inman Park Tree Watch also has ongoing projects which are replanting public spaces within the neighborhood. To fund these types of projects they hold an annual party called the Tree Huggers' Ball. Anyone may attend, and money is raised through donations made at the door.

Each of the three neighborhoods has a particular system of funding and fundraising that works best for its constituency. Residents of the area must feel

comfortable and involved in the generation of funds. Often, requiring a mandatory donation or the payment of dues is not effective. All three case study programs request orders and donations. People are encouraged to donate what they are comfortable giving. As a program plants more and more trees, residents see and understand the benefits of the programs and, in time, they give more.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS

This thesis began with the question: “Can a neighborhood become responsible for its own urban forest?” To answer this question, numerous issues relating to urban forestry were studied to better understand *why* the answer is so critical. The relationship between urban forestry and landscape architecture was explored, along with a brief history of urban forestry, issues in urban forestry management, funding of urban forestry programs, the role of citizen involvement in the health of urban forests, as well as the benefits of urban trees to biological and social ecosystems.

To answer the question of *how* a neighborhood can become responsible for its urban forest, three urban forestry neighborhood projects were evaluated through case study analysis to identify how each one went about creating and administering its program. The method of case study analysis evaluated each neighborhood’s program in the same way. The information gathered in each case study was presented under the critical aspect headings: project name, location, date created, date completed, progress to date, project goal, financial, educational, technical assistance, project background and history, role of the project’s directors, a year in the life of the project, role of the neighborhood’s residents, maintenance, photographs of the neighborhood, lessons learned, and archival research. The interviews with each program’s founders and administrators were displayed in their entirety.

Through analysis of the three case study programs, five components became apparent as the central issues of each neighborhood’s urban forestry program. The components are the need for a passionate visionary, the neighborhood itself, the project goal, the available resources and technical assistance, and the appropriate means of

funding. These components are the primary issues to be dealt with for a neighborhood to create its own urban forestry program. Can a neighborhood create a viable program that successfully administers the maintenance to sustain the vitality of its tree population? The three neighborhood studies indicate that resident associations can meet success, and it can be done fairly readily if there is at least one person who works passionately to make it happen.

The notion that any neighborhood can create its own urban forestry program to accomplish goals important to the neighborhood is an important one. The case studies presented in this thesis and the five components necessary to develop a program of this sort make the dream of founding and running a program that will benefit all the people in a neighborhood and its future generations, an attainable vision. This thesis focuses on urban forestry issues and the importance of understanding and working on these issues, but it is also about allowing people at the local level to do something major for the environment's health which, in turn, has a global effect.

The information presented in this thesis demonstrates that all it really takes to create an urban forestry program for a neighborhood is the desire to do so. As neighborhoods evolve and organize to work out other issues important to them, they will be able to use this thesis as a guide for determining how to start an urban forestry program and how to administer it in the way appropriate for a specific neighborhood.

This study had one major limitation. It was my original intent to explore the available research in the area of neighborhood planning and the dynamics of neighborhood associations. This research would complete the link between urban forestry issues and the case studies of neighborhood organizations that care for their

urban forest. If research has been conducted about the dynamics of the neighborhood association or about how a typical neighborhood might organize itself to tackle various issues, I was unable to find it.

The research into this topic and my conversations with people who work in the field of urban forestry, both professionally and at a grass-roots level, have made me aware of research that could be done in the future to help cities establish a more dense and healthy urban forest. First, I think the reason many neighborhood associations do not create a committee to care for and replant their urban forest is because it simply does not occur to them to do so. As I discussed in the literature review, people typically take the trees that grow around them in their cities for granted. People do not see these trees as part of a larger forest. It is the responsibility of professionals, such as landscape architects, arborists, and municipal and state foresters, to educate local citizens and help them organize so that each city can develop a lush urban canopy. Research should be conducted to establish methods for city, state, or federal governments to work with every neighborhood to produce its own urban forestry committee.

It is important for people to understand that the trees in our front and back yards and the trees that grow along our busy streets are part of a larger forest. It is an urban forest and a delicate ecosystem that functions just like any other forest ecosystem. As our cities grow, we have an opportunity to establish and grow not only a community of people, but also a forest of trees. It is my hope that as urban areas continue to grow and sprawl across our earth's surface that more research will be done and more will be written to ensure that trees will become an integral part of new and old developments. As more is written, more will be understood about the way each urban tree fits into the larger

puzzle of our environment's total health. As people understand how they fit into this puzzle, their willingness to become stewards of their own neighborhood's forest will grow.

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VITA

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