

Policy Report:
Working with the Community:
A Conceptual Framework for
Urban Forest Managers

Forest Policy Center Report 92-3

October 21, 1992

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FOREWORD

During the past decade, we have come to a far greater understanding of the broad array of benefits we enjoy from trees in the urban environment--the urban forest. Of course, we have long appreciated the aesthetic contributions that trees make to a greener, more appealing urban landscape. And property owners have long reckoned the increased value that graceful, tree-lined walks and shady yards lend to homes and other buildings. More recently, however, we have gained a new appreciation for the role that a healthy, extensive urban forest can play in mitigating urban air and noise pollution, moderating stormwater runoff, and even reducing the amount of fossil fuel-generated electricity needed to heat and cool our homes. The benefits are great, and the potential for increasing them through expanding the urban forest is far greater.

It is thus ironic that, just as we are coming to understand the multitude of values and benefits that the urban forest gives us, municipal forestry programs to care for and maintain urban trees are being drastically reduced--or eliminated outright--as cities around the United States re-evaluate budget priorities and make difficult financial choices. But in the benefit-cost calculus of public spending, is the broad array of urban forest values as clear to municipal officials and city council members as it is to urban forestry professionals? Apparently not. If it were, budget priorities would come out differently, with greater support provided for maintaining and improving the urban forest.

Several things are needed. First, we need to better understand where these programs sit with respect to the multitude of other public needs in the urban environment. In cities across America, the needs are growing much faster

than the resources available to address them. But this is not a reason for urban forestry professionals to despair. It merely points up the need to broaden our perspective, from viewing urban forestry programs as separate from and in competition with other municipal programs to seeing how urban forestry can be *linked* to those other programs to better achieve mutual goals and objectives. If urban forestry is to move up the scale of budget priorities, then urban foresters will have to become more skilled in the politics of policymaking and more effective in articulating the ways in which urban forestry can help urban leaders address the larger and more pressing challenges they face.

Second, we need to understand that urban forestry professionals cannot--and clearly need not--do this on their own. Many citizens recognize the importance of maintaining the health and vitality of the trees that grace their streets and neighborhoods, and many more are receptive to learning about the values of the urban forest. Hundreds of community groups in cities, large and small, have taken up the cause of tree-planting as a way of improving their communities. These citizens and community groups represent a tremendous reservoir of energy and talent for the innovative urban forest manager to tap into. They also vote, and can be highly effective at making sure their elected officials know how important these programs are to them.

In this paper, Doug Wellman and Terry Tipple offer a host of ideas and suggestions for how urban forestry professionals, with a little creativity and flexibility, can work in concert with citizens and community groups to make our cities more livable. These ideas are solidly grounded in actual experience with successful

urban forestry programs in cities both here in the U.S. and abroad. It is not a cookbook or a detailed "how-to" guide. Rather, it aims to open new vistas and new opportunities to urban forestry professionals by leading them closer to what it means to be an effective leader--that is, understanding the role and relevance of what we do in the grand scheme of things, and how we might improve upon that to better serve our

fellow citizens and the world we inhabit. The Forest Policy Center at AMERICAN FORESTS is pleased to help make this contribution to the improvement of the management, administration, and leadership in urban forestry programs, and ultimately to a better urban forest.

V. Alaric Sample, *Director*
Forest Policy Center

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper is to provide urban forest managers and students a framework for involving the public in urban forestry programs, and a guide to the "art" of developing creative and productive partnerships. Findings from personal interviews with urban foresters in three United States and seven Dutch cities, and a survey of members of the Municipal Arborists and Urban Foresters Society, are used to illustrate key points.

Three reasons are developed for involving individuals and community groups directly in program management. First, citizens can assist with program delivery and forest protection, bring new resources, and augment the reach and effectiveness of educational efforts. Second, direct citizen involvement is the surest way to develop the community support which is essential to program success. Third, in working directly with citizens, urban forest managers can contribute to democratic governance by encouraging citizens to work together in pursuit of the public interest.

A variety of approaches to citizen involvement are illustrated and urban foresters' attitudes about working in partnership with citi-

zens are explored. As a way of building a broad and strong base of community support, urban foresters are urged to try to involve interests other than traditional support groups in their programs. Urban forest managers are also advised to consider citizen's needs for role clarity and empowerment; if fruitful and lasting partnerships are to be formed, citizen volunteers have to know what is expected of them, and they have to feel a sense of responsibility for the program.

Finally, urban foresters should think of community involvement as one element of a broader strategy for positioning the program in its social and political environment. Spanning the boundaries between the urban forestry program and other players such as administrative agencies, land developers, and city council members can help support and protect the program, thereby increasing the prospects for successful partnerships. At the same time, the solid community support that comes with public involvement can improve the program's credibility in the eyes of these other players, thereby enhancing its stature and prospects.

INTRODUCTION

Like foresters working in remote natural settings, urban foresters have tended to focus their attention on the physical landscape. The published literature in urban and community forestry is replete with information on how to select, plant, protect, and replace trees and other vegetation, but there is relatively little on the social dimensions of urban forestry. Those calling for greater attention to the "art" of urban forest management have largely been overshadowed by those calling for more and better information about the "science" of the profession.

In particular, and of greatest importance to this paper, the literature on working with citizens and their groups is quite limited relative to that which exists on technical matters. Such literature as does exist is informative and helpful, as represented by the following sampling.

AMERICAN FORESTS covers volunteer outreach and citizen action by documenting partnerships in each edition of its bimonthly magazine, *Urban Forests*. Of particular note is an article by Toups (1992) that describes several innovative public/private partnerships around the country that have incorporated ethnic and racial diversity in tree planting and care programs. Kreem (1990) reports on efforts by citizen groups to work with local government and incorporate tree maintenance into their volunteer programs. Dawe (1990) describes cooperative efforts between corporations, citizens, and municipal governments. Sievert (1988) reviews creative efforts throughout the state of Ohio in which positive public relations—a must for program success—have been developed through citizen involvement. Textbooks by Gray and Deneke (1986) and Miller

(1988) correctly point out that the favorable public image essential to urban forestry programs cannot be obtained through a media blitz, but must be built through good work, professional demeanor, and courteous communications by all members of the organization. Dawe (1989) reviews examples of visionary citizen leadership in urban forestry programs in Mobile, San Francisco, New York City, Philadelphia, Atlanta, and Los Angeles. Eaton (1983) tells the stories of how urban foresters and citizens in Cincinnati, Minneapolis, and New York City worked together in response to tree blight and budgetary cutbacks. Harrell and Gornicki (1981) describe Florida's pioneering urban forestry program, including involving citizens in an "adopt-a-tree" program. Moronne (1978) draws on theories of group behavior to explain why small group action will lead to improvement in citizen attitudes toward urban forestry. Lipkis and Lipkis (1990) show how to mobilize direct citizen participation for environmental improvement and community empowerment. Moll and Young (1992) describe how to form a broad-based local council or committee to spur local support for urban forestry.

Based on a study of urban forestry programs in 12 U.S. cities, Johnson (1982) concluded that most were under funded because political constituencies necessary for program support were missing. Johnson's first recommendation was as follows:

First, there is a need for the development of improved skills in linking programs with the total spectrum of public needs in the urban environment. This implies a more

wide-ranging search for the benefits (especially measurable benefits, such as climate moderation, and tangible benefits such as socio-economic impacts) of properly managed forests. This also suggests more highly developed skills of public outreach and involvement in proposed and ongoing urban-forestry programs. In this way, the salience of the issues surrounding urban-forestry might be moved up the scale of urban priorities. And urban-foresters need to be better trained in the politics of policymaking. They must become effective advocates both in the quiet councils of government and in the more public forums that affect policy decisions. As they do, they will help promote urban-forestry as an integral part of serious urban action.

In these words, Johnson mapped out the directions we have taken in our research. However, like the other references cited, Johnson's prescription for working with the public in urban forest management tends to lack a theoretical perspective. The majority of the literature consists of anecdotal accounts; these are helpful for managers trying to find their way in an aspect of their profession for which few have been prepared, but a more systematic account is needed to provide a basis for deeper learning.

This paper is written for the men and women now working as professionals in urban and community forestry and related positions, and for the students in arboriculture, landscape architecture, urban planning, park management, urban forestry and related programs who will provide future leadership. Our goal is modest: to provide a starting point for current and prospective urban forest managers' thinking about their relationship to the communities they serve. Our hope is that this paper will offer a helpful guide to the "art" of developing creative, productive partnerships with citizens and their organizations.

This paper is based in part on our personal interviews with urban forest managers in three cities in the United States and seven cities in The Netherlands, and on a survey (68 percent response) of the membership of the Municipal Arborists and Urban Foresters Society (Tipple and Wellman, 1988; Wellman and Tipple, 1989; Tipple et al., 1990; Wellman and Tipple, 1991). In addition, the ideas presented in this paper have emerged from our work experience and prior research in national forest and national park administration and from our educational backgrounds in the social sciences, and public administration and policy.

WHY INVOLVE THE PUBLIC?

A skeptic could argue that involving the public in urban forestry is inappropriate and, at best, more trouble than it is worth. Our study of public administration in general, and urban forest management in particular, has brought us to the opposite conclusion. We believe that active public involvement is not only desirable, but essential to the functioning of a sound urban forestry program. There are numerous good reasons, practical and theoretical, for urban foresters to support active public involvement in urban forestry.

First, individuals and community groups can serve as integral parts of the urban forest management system. In essence, urban foresters can stretch their resources by involving members of the public in their programs. Volunteers throughout the country make an enormous contribution to urban forest management by planting and watering trees, by planting and maintaining the streetside flower beds that increasingly grace our cities and towns, and other activities. Citizen volunteers have been trained to prune trees, one of the most recommended and most neglected aspects of urban tree care. Citizens can assist managers in maintaining current inventories, and they can provide an early warning system for identifying problems. In these and many other ways, limited urban forestry budgets can be stretched and program effectiveness increased. In this era of resource scarcity, it is unwise to overlook the potential contributions volunteers can make.

"Citizen support has been the keystone of every successful urban forestry program in the nation."

In addition to bringing in new resources in the form of volunteer labor, involving citizens can stretch program resources by helping reduce losses from inadvertent damage and purposeful vandalism. Many of the things that threaten trees and reduce their life expectancy, such as soil compaction and bark injuries, are the result of ignorance. Citizen volunteers can

greatly augment the reach and effectiveness of urban forestry educational efforts. At the same time, the sense of ownership citizens come to feel when they are fully involved in urban forestry programs provides the program manager with an unsurpassed first line of defense against deliberate vandalism. Direct citizen involvement in urban forestry programs can

help shift the public mindset from "their trees" to "our trees", from "their responsibility" to "our responsibility", and from "their problem" to "our problem." Once the public mindset has changed in this way, the possibilities for creative problem solving and successful urban forestry program management are much greater.

The second reason for involving the public in urban forest management is that it is the surest way to develop community support for the program. If urban forestry programs are to compete effectively for scarce public funding, and if they are to be supported when their goals conflict with other public and private initiatives like transportation and utility infrastructure development, they must have community support. In Eaton's (1983) words: "Citizen support has been the keystone of every

successful urban forestry program in the nation."

Successful urban forestry program managers are good at developing and maintaining community support. They do not take their social and political environments as given but work actively to create a situation in which their programs will flourish. For example, they use the media to raise community consciousness about urban forestry, work with community improvement projects, participate in speakers forums, and seize opportunities for high-profile actions like emergency watering during droughts. There are many ways of creating a favorable climate for urban forestry, and successful urban forest managers are constantly alert and looking for opportunities.

Some managers are concerned that in trying to develop community support, urban foresters may be crossing the line into political activity. However, we believe it is legitimate for professionals in the public service to attempt to create favorable environments for their programs. Given the complexity of the issues being addressed by public agencies, the great uncertainty about the future, and the scope of government, it is unrealistic to think that the executive branch simply implements legislative policies. Members of the executive branch, including urban forestry program managers, must translate technical program issues into understandable terms and demonstrate their relevance for the community to both elected officials and the general public. The executive empowerment we assume does not, however, constitute license; regulations, explicit and implicit rules of conduct, and generally understood ethical guidelines set limits on the activities executive branch members can

*...it is legitimate
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undertake to develop public support for their programs (Wamsley et al., 1990).

In our survey of the Municipal Arborists and Urban Foresters Society (MAUFS), we found that the vast majority (84 percent) think that urban foresters should work to develop community support for their programs. In a follow-up question, we asked them to explain why they felt this way. Several themes emerge from their written answers. Some saw community support as necessary to secure volunteer resources and to influence politicians and administrators to support the program:

"Everything is politics although not necessarily political. It is critical to obtain community support to pass taxes [budgets] and to remind the politicians that urban forestry programs are essential to the citizens."

"Call it politics. Call it support. If you can coordinate groups of people doing wonderful things for their neighborhood and community, who cares if it is politics? Think about the number of free hours and additional funds coming to a program which beautifies a city."

Some justified their stance by appeal to the larger social good. Urban forests are sufficiently valuable that "political" activity is justified:

"From our education and experience we know the value of a good urban forestry program for the benefit of all. We are obligated to develop community support to improve living conditions, increase value, reduce hazards, etc."

"If we are stewards of the land, we must each take responsibility for it, and be willing to do anything (legally) to guarantee its success."

"Sure, developing community support is politics. But we're dealing with an important issue. Unless we use politics we'll never win the war."

Others started from the assumption that urban forest managers are public servants, employed by the citizenry to pursue commonly desired goals. Therefore, they have both the right and the obligation to try to build public support for their programs:

"As a public servant, the service I provide is the fostering of the community's understanding and appreciation of the urban forest. Like any type of education, it doesn't just come from lectures or books but from a variety of tools. The instructor must take a proactive role and if some regard this as lobbying, then perhaps it is. The community is seldom aware of all the services the local municipality provides, and I also feel it's my job to show the community where their money is being spent by highlighting the urban forestry programs. Perhaps the community will let me know if there is a new need to be met or a particular program is not what the community desires."

"People must be made aware of their local government's programs, and they should voice their opinions on issues such as these. In order to achieve this awareness and cooperation, it is incumbent on the urban forester to develop a positive, open communication with the community. It is the right and responsibility of every citizen to become aware of what programs are being proposed by his local government, and his responsibility to make an informed decision about the direction he wants the administration to take."

The third reason for working with citizens is that urban forest managers can contribute to democratic governance. Central to the notion of a functioning democracy, one that works on behalf of the public interest, is an informed and involved citizenry. Without such involvement, the members of government (including urban forest program managers) can lose touch with the citizenry and miss the mark in designing programs to serve the public interest (Tipple and Wellman, 1989; Wellman and Tipple, 1990).

This is essentially the same idea that is driving innovation in modern business management. Management theorists are counseling business leaders to stay in touch with their customers, through programs stressing quality improvement and "total quality management" (e.g. Dobyns and Crawford-Mason, 1991). At the core of these programs lies the basic tenet of involving the customer in the work of the organization. For urban foresters, the customers are the community residents and visitors who come in contact with the urban forest. They should be afforded every opportunity to be involved in the planning, execution, and evaluation of the urban forestry program. Their

WHY NOT INVOLVE THE PUBLIC?

A majority of urban forest managers want to involve the public, but supervisors may be against it. Here are some common concerns of departmental supervisors:

Volunteers tend to weaken government programs in their zeal to fill an assumed need. They point to gaps in management and assume that there is a lack in leadership, when other concerns may have top priority in the short term.

Volunteers tend to have tunnelvision, believing that their concerns should have top priority.

Government must budget time to train, and retrain, new volunteers. Leveraging government

resources is great, but often this benefit is offset by new demands on management.

Public participation and activism for one program may take resources away from other programs. What's good for one program is bad for another.

Lobbying efforts for one program may lead to inter- and intra-departmental feuds in the battle for general fund dollars.

--Phillip D. Rodbell, Urban Forester

involvement will help insure that the program truly serves the public interest.

Beyond helping keep public managers in touch with the community they serve, direct citizen involvement in urban forestry programs can help nurture a broader capacity for democratic governance in the citizenry. Our representative democracy could benefit from the leavening of some direct democracy. According to political theory dating back to ancient Greece, direct democracy exists when citizens come together and exercise their judgment in deciding how the broad public interest can best be served by action on particular concerns (Wellman and Tipple, 1990).

The crucial elements in the theory of direct democracy are authoritative action, consideration of the public interest, moral learning, and development of community (Stivers, 1990). Authoritative action means that citizens must participate directly in governance; just as public managers apply their professional judgment to make binding decisions, so must citizens come together and apply their practical wisdom to make authoritative decisions about specific issues. Consideration of the public interest means that in taking authoritative action, all interested parties should be involved, and citizens should work within the constitutional framework to think as broadly as possible about the implications of their actions. Moral learning means that in the process of working together citizens will learn from each other; the narrow focus with which they begin will broaden and their ethical horizons will expand. Development of community means that in the process of working together to solve real problems, citizens will come to feel a sense of connection with each other.

Among the many forces in modern American life that undercut direct democracy is the administrative efficiency model of public administration. In this way of thinking, which is

the tacit ideology that has guided daily life in the public administration since the days of Frederick Taylor and Woodrow Wilson, public servants are divorced from the political life of the community. They receive direction from elected bodies, and their mission is to deliver programs in the most efficient manner possible, thereby demonstrating "neutral competency." Unfortunately, the administrative efficiency model tends to remove citizens from direct contact with many of the most salient concerns of the community, and therefore to undercut direct democracy.

Current thinking in public administration attempts to redefine the relationship between public administrators and the communities they serve (Wamsley et al., 1990). Rather than the traditional professional-client relationship, where the professional's expertise is wrapped in mystique and the passive client agrees not to question his authority (Schon, 1983), theorists now argue that we should view public administrators--including urban forestry program managers--as "professional citizens." Bureaucratic ethics should reflect the ethical obligations that come with citizenship in a democracy, including "...responsibility for establishing and maintaining horizontal relationships of authority with one's fellow citizens, seeking 'power with' rather than 'power over' the citizenry (Cooper, 1984).

Urban forest management is an excellent place for nurturing direct democracy. Trees and associated vegetation are highly visible and treasured aspects of urban life (Hull, 1992; Willeke, 1987; Conrad, 1992). The immediacy and intrinsic worth of the urban green encourages the citizen motivation necessary for direct democracy to work. Those urban foresters who have worked in partnership with the public attest to the high level of energy and commitment citizens bring to the task. Urban forest management can be a nursery for democracy.

HOW URBAN FORESTERS WORK WITH THE PUBLIC

In our survey of MAUFS members, we asked respondents to tell us about the most successful ways they knew of for connecting urban forestry programs with outside interests, whether they had done them themselves or only heard about what others had done. Most of the answers to this open-ended question concerned working with citizens to develop community support, and most of the activities reported were carried out directly by those responding. MAUFS members reported a wide variety of ways they had worked directly with citizens and their groups in order to serve the public interest and build community support for their programs. Following is a selection of the responses we received:

- ◆ Assisted a Junior Women's Club organize a "Free Tree Dig-in Day" to allow general public to remove trees from an area about to be bulldozed for development. The Women's Club helped with media contacts, youth involvement and arranging contact with the developer and land owner. 6000 people showed up the first day. This was repeated for six years. The Club won the state and national Jr. Women's Club awards for conservation efforts and youth involvement. The Division of Forestry (VA) and other Society of American Foresters members provided the technical support.
- ◆ Involved civic club and interested individuals in a program to identify historically important trees in the community and to develop a brochure for a self-guided tour of these important trees.
- ◆ Initiated an Art Festival that will observe its 25th anniversary this year. It is the oldest outdoor art fair in Ohio and now

generates over \$25,000 annually to support the city Botanical Garden (which we also started and currently operate).

- ◆ Used horticultural societies and homeowner associations to develop more interest in our Dutch elm disease management program. They helped survey for symptoms of the disease.
- ◆ The solicitation of garden clubs to become involved in community landscape projects has proven to be very successful based on the following reasons: high quality work performed; reliable source of labor; promotes cooperation between village and volunteer organizations; very cost effective; promotes community pride and spirit.
- ◆ Our cooperative tree planting program planted over 10,000 trees in the last decade. Private citizens helped select, solicit, and pay for street trees in their neighborhoods.
- ◆ Implemented a senior citizen program where senior citizens were hired to maintain small parcels with flower beds.

This is but a sampling of the approaches to citizen involvement reported by the members of MAUFS. In addition, MAUFS members reported working directly with individuals and groups in their communities in Arbor Day celebrations, oak wilt programs, emergency tree watering, Gypsy Moth control, Christmas tree recycling, and other ways. In many cases, they developed public relations efforts to publicize these programs and to thank volunteers for their contributions of time and effort in making the programs successful.

Citizens who invest their sweat equity in an urban forestry program tend to develop a sense of ownership in that program. Quite naturally,

with that sense of ownership they frequently will want to have a say in the program's direction. Traditional "command and control" managers may find this part of citizen involvement challenging. That is why in our survey we examined MAUFS' members attitudes about working with the public.

We asked MAUFS members to indicate the level of citizen involvement in urban forest management they believe is appropriate. The question was introduced in the following way: "In managing the national forests, working with citizens and their groups has become increasingly important in recent years. How would you feel about an urban forest program managers' working with a citizen task force? From the positions described below, please check the one you feel is most appropriate."

We described four positions along a continuum from manager-centered decision making to citizen-manager partnership:

1. "Professional managers should make the decisions."
2. "Professional managers should make the decisions, but they should listen to all input."
3. "Managers have to make decisions in cooperation with others. A task force to develop alternatives and make recommendations is a good public involvement method, but managers should still retain decision authority."
4. "If the task force comes to a consensus on a feasible, legal alternative, managers must be willing to accept and adopt it."

MAUFS members tended to believe citizens should be involved at some level in decisions about urban forestry program manage-

VOLUNTEER PARTNERSHIPS

Urban forest managers involved with American Forests' Global ReLeaf campaign offer more examples of partnerships at work to improve urban forests:

Used 139 volunteers (totalling 367 man-hours) from a non-profit group to plant 1,800 native trees and shrubs in city-owned natural areas. Afterwards, the volunteers continued to provide much needed after-care of the plants that included watering the unirrigated site to help ensure survival.

Assisted the Court Designated Workers program to train juvenile first-time offenders to plant and care for trees on public lands.

Citizens provided the physical labor to plant and care for trees, and the city provided the trees, stakes, mulch and guidance on where and how to plant them.

Trained volunteers to assist in city-wide street tree inventory.

Trained people to become "neighborhood tree experts." One volunteer said in the local newspaper, "Doing it this way means the city provides what it's good at, and the neighbors pitch in at what they're good at."

Solicited materials and volunteers to create an award winning display on the importance of trees and their benefits in the urban environment.

Provided labor for planting and maintenance of park trees, a local corporation matched funds raised by a local citizen group, and a local utility company provided in-kind services through the use of its arborist to assist the city in maintaining the trees.

--Karen Fedor, Global ReLeaf Coordinator

ment. Most (44 percent) endorsed Position 3, which encourages citizens to work together to provide guidance but reserves final decision authority to the manager. Fewer than two percent endorsed position 1 ("Trust us, we're the experts"), and 26 percent chose position 2 ("We'll listen to your suggestions"). Most interesting for this discussion, 28 percent of the respondents selected Position 4, which represents a partnership between managers and fully empowered citizens.

These findings demonstrate that in their thinking MAUFS members are well along toward the goal of democratic governance. Further research on a more representative sample of urban foresters is needed to determine whether other urban and community forestry professionals' thinking is accurately depicted by the responses of the MAUFS members who responded to our survey.

Community Outreach

Many urban forestry program managers work successfully with members of their communities who share a direct commitment to the trees and other forest resources. Often organized into a Street Tree Commission, Urban Forest Council, Tree Board, or other advisory body, these groups provide a valuable linkage to the citizens of a community. They can be of great assistance in securing critical resources and developing community support. There are many examples of successful partnerships between urban forestry professionals and citizen groups. Based on our reading, experience, and research, we strongly encourage program managers to develop and nurture partnerships with

groups committed to the betterment of the urban forest.

However, urban forest managers should not stop there. Beneficial as partnerships with those who share a direct interest in trees are, urban forestry program managers should also try to work with other groups, as well. It is a common human tendency to prefer to work with people having similar views and interests, but failing to reach out to a broader range of the citizenry can severely limit the level of support

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for a program. "Preaching to the choir," or working only with those in tree-related groups, gives the program manager access to too narrow a slice of the citizenry. Successful urban forestry programs are often known and supported by a wide array of citizen organizations transcending the traditional urban forestry community advisory groups. Our research has produced many examples of urban forestry program managers working successfully with citizen groups whose primary focus is on something other

than trees.

Our first illustration is from the City of Minneapolis. There, the urban forestry program manager has built a solid working relationship with education and youth organizations. This has been accomplished primarily through the use of "Elmer the Tree," who explains the story of the American elm tree, Dutch elm disease, and the broader implications of wise urban forest management to audiences throughout the city. The urban forestry message is thereby conveyed to children, parents, teachers, and counselors across income, ethnic, and geographical boundaries within that community. City residents reached by the

"Elmer the Tree" program are potential sources of support for the urban forestry program.

A second illustration of ways to broaden program support comes from Milwaukee. There, the city forester has built alliances with a number of organizations, including those involved in industrial redevelopment. He and his staff have worked closely with local economic development interests in revitalizing an abandoned stretch of land in the manufacturing core of the city. There, along with upgrading water, street, and sewer infrastructure, the city has provided street trees and landscaping in an effort to attract new and expanding industry. In addition to providing new vegetation to a section of the city in need of it, the urban forestry program manager has brought across the message that all parts of the city, including this heavy manufacturing area, require trees and landscaping. He has also helped the economic development interest group understand the contribution that trees and associated vegetation can play in attracting businesses.

One of the most effective ways to build long-term community support is to align the urban forestry program with overarching social values in the community. We found this concept strongly illustrated in a number of the Dutch programs we studied. In the new town of Nieuwegein, for example, the green manager has made the case that the urban green can serve as a visual connection between the city's new buildings and its recently discovered archaeological past. In this way, the urban forest is linked to the overarching social value of a sense of the past amidst a new urban landscape. In Den Bosch, a city characterized by collaborative efforts in pursuit of economic growth, the urban green is seen as an integral part of an infrastructure to attract desirable business and industrial growth. In the city of Zwolle, the green manager has taken a high profile leadership role in environmental education, an effort

high on the list of the city's priorities. To help citizens understand the interdependency of their urban existence with the life of the surrounding agricultural areas, he has established city-owned farms for children and used native vegetation along major streets. These penetrator roads serve as "green fingers", and symbolically connect the city with the countryside (Tipple et al., 1990).

Finally, in Apeldoorn we found a program manager who has linked the urban forestry program to ongoing historic and cultural restoration efforts in that city. He has built community support for his program by working with influential citizens interested in the restoration of Het Loo Palace, the 17th Century estate of William and Mary. Through his work on the grounds of the estate, he has shown these influential members of the community that urban forest management goes hand in hand with historic and cultural resource management. Making that linkage to something they treasure has led them to support his program.

These examples from the United States and abroad demonstrate the benefits of working with citizen groups outside the traditional tree program support groups. Working with an inclusive model of citizen participation, the urban forestry program managers in Minneapolis, Milwaukee, and a number of Dutch cities have not only advanced their programs directly, but they have also significantly broadened the base of support for their programs in the community.

In seeking partnerships with citizen groups, urban foresters should try to work with groups exhibiting three characteristics: interests which complement those of the urban forestry program; a purpose linked to some overarching social value in the community; and the ability to contribute to the strategic advancement of the urban forestry program. First, working with an organization whose purpose is complementary

to the purpose of the urban forestry program helps demonstrate that good vegetation management is consistent with other desirable conditions in the community, such as education, historic preservation, and economic development. Second, by linking the urban forestry program to programs clearly tied to overarching community values, an urban forestry program can be elevated in prominence in the social consciousness of that community. Finally, priority should be given to forming alliances with groups that can provide the long term, strategic support necessary for garnering such resources as funding, labor, and equipment. It is no accident that the non-traditional groups the urban foresters we studied worked with wield considerable political clout in their respective cities. Blending the interests of the urban forestry program with those of other community programs can often lead to progress for both, as programmatic and political synergies result.

Providing Leadership

Working with citizen groups to advance the urban forestry program involves getting work done through indirect channels. Partnerships, cooperatively run projects, and full utilization of volunteer resources require a shift in the managerial mindset. The workforce of citizen group members does not report directly to the manager; instead, citizen volunteers have primary allegiance to their organizations and to their causes. Therefore, in place of traditional command and control supervisors concentrating on doing things right, urban foresters working with the public become facilitative leaders, coaches, and technical supporters helping citizens to do the right thing (Bass, 1990; Vroom, 1988).

Under this model of citizen involvement,

two concepts—role clarity and empowerment—are particularly relevant to providing effective leadership. **Role clarity** refers to the need to be very specific about such things as who will perform what task, to what standard, and in what sequence. Unless the work of the citizen workforce is closely coordinated with that of civil servants and contractors, important tasks will be forgotten, duplication will occur, and mistakes will be made. Frustration will result on both sides, and opportunities to strengthen the program will be missed. On the other hand, being very clear about the roles of all parties can help position a program for success, and this success can promote the interests of all.

Empowerment is the second key concept. In working with citizen partners it is critical to remember that their primary motivation is a desire to contribute to their community. As a leader in this social environment, the urban forestry program manager can increase volunteers' sense of contributing by empowering them to attain the requisite skills and to play major and active roles in the urban forestry program. The approach of training "citizen foresters" taken by TreePeople and the City of Los Angeles is grounded in the notion of empowerment (Lipkis and Lipkis, 1990). Their approach recognizes that if people are given the proper resources, understand their role, and are allowed to share in the responsibility for the outcome of a project, they will maximize their sense of accomplishment and seek to do more. On the other hand, if they are working without adequate resources, are not well trained, are not clear about their role, and don't share in the responsibility for the project, their sense of contribution and their motivation will be much lower. Clearly, a key part of the leadership role in urban forestry is to empower citizens to share in the responsibilities and accomplishments of managing the program.

Boundary Spanning Activities

Urban forest managers should recognize that working directly with the community must be complemented by other activities which mediate between their programs and the social and political environments in which they exist. Urban forestry programs must compete for essential resources with other programs and proposals. Like seedlings in the forest, urban forestry programs face environmental uncertainty throughout their life cycles. Viewed in this light, the role of the urban forester expands from technical expert to program guardian, constantly watching for changes in the environment which promise health and development or threaten stress and decline.

To be successful, managers must continuously be alert to the relationships between their programs and other outside forces including administrative agencies, the mayor's office, city council, and major developers. Like citizens and their groups, these other actors represent both potential sources of support and possible threats to the program. Gathering information about the activities and plans of these outside forces, representing the urban forestry program to them, and protecting the program from undue disturbance from them are "**Boundary Spanning Activities**" (Tipple and Wellman, 1988). These activities at the interface between the urban forestry program and the surrounding social and political environment are essential to assuring program viability in the turbulent contexts in which most urban forestry programs exist.

Boundary spanning activities are not the same thing as public relations, at least as public relations is traditionally defined. Rather than

one-way messages designed to create a favorable climate for the organization, boundary spanning involves a two-way dialogue aimed not simply at shaping public opinion but also at listening to public concerns and interpreting their implications for the program. And boundary spanning involves not only "the public," but also developers, other administrative units, state and federal agencies, and legislative bodies whose actions may help or hinder the urban forestry program.

Of central importance for this paper, boundary spanning activities must be viewed as a necessary complement to the work of community volunteers. Boundary spanning activities open windows of opportunity, provide information about potential problems threatening the urban forest, and help assure the availability of the public resources (equipment, planting stock, personnel, etc.) necessary for strong and effective agency/public partnerships.

Working with citizens and their groups should be viewed as one of a range of boundary spanning activities which position the urban forestry program in its social and political environment. However, the solid currency on which effective boundary spanning must be based is community support. Unless there is strong and sustained community support for their programs, urban forest managers will find it hard to be taken seriously by city administration, political leaders, and private sector influentials. On the other hand, solid community backing, developed through working partnerships between professionally trained managers and the citizens they serve, will open a multitude of possibilities for creative interaction with these outside forces.

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CONCLUSIONS

The urban forest management community is very aware of the physical threats to the urban forest. Research has provided a great deal of technical information on how best to maintain healthy urban forests, and practicing professionals have shared what they have learned from their innovative efforts to plant and protect the urban green. Unfortunately, however, there is not a comparable literature on how to develop and maintain healthy urban forestry programs. Yet, our ability to put technical knowledge into practice and stop the alarming decline of our city forests depends on having the necessary personnel, equipment, and budgets. Unless we have healthy urban forestry programs, we will not have healthy urban forests.

Healthy urban forests, and the multitude of social, environmental, and economic benefits that flow from them, depend on strong and sustained community support. Fleeting periods of tree planting excitement will not suffice. Perhaps even more than other public programs, because powerful economic interests tend not to back them strongly, urban forestry programs depend on community support. There are many ways of encouraging community support, but one of the essential and most effective of these is direct citizen involvement in the urban forestry program. In taking an active role in planning and managing the urban green, people also take pride in and accept responsibility for the trees and associated vegetation that make up the urban forest. Instead of taking the forest for granted until a crisis like a hurricane or pestilence comes along, they will tend to de-

velop the broad, long-range perspective which is critical to program success.

To be successful, urban forest program managers must exercise leadership in pursuit of the public interest. Such leadership for urban forestry, just as for other public programs (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992), necessarily entails a proactive, entrepreneurial approach to creating conditions in which urban forestry programs can thrive. These conditions must be able to sustain the program over the long haul, through the inevitable ebbs and flows of public interest in the resources entrusted to its care.

If the time and energy citizens devote to improving their urban forests is to be well-directed, efficient, and productive enough to encourage further action, it must be carried out in partnership with urban forest management professionals. Their technical expertise is crucial to success. Unfortunately, there has been little in most professional education to prepare practicing public sector managers for working with citizens and community groups. A great service has been provided to the profession by those pioneers who have tried new and innovative ways of working with the public and have shared their practical wisdom with others. Our goal in this paper has been to provide a conceptual framework for urban forest managers engaged in the dialogue about working with the public. Our hope is that this framework will stimulate and channel this dialogue in deeper and more fruitful channels, so that our understanding of the art of urban forest management will come to more nearly balance our command of the science.

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