

# 2016 Urban Forestry End of Year Report

Prepared by: Bryce Patz and Bev Shaw

This year, as well as the three years prior, emerald ash borer has been the main challenge in maintaining our urban forest causing a mass removal of dead or hazardous declining trees within the city's right of way. Roughly 330 ash trees were removed due to EAB infestation, and over 200 placed on next year's watch list. This leaves around 303 ash trees left standing in our urban forest, with a fraction of homeowners treating for EAB. We project that in 2017, the majority of the remaining ash trees will be removed or slated for removal, relieving the pressure on our urban forest from EAB and on our street department and city budgets regarding ash removal. Areas where large portions of ash were removed include Sagamore Parkway and University Farms.

A total of 376 trees were removed in 2016, removing the majority of Priority 1 removals within West Lafayette. Roughly 4% of this year's tree removals were not ash, including young trees planted within the last 3 years. Species include more mature maples, swamp white oaks, young tulip trees, and sweet gums.

Even though a large number of trees were removed, 2016 was a very successful year for new tree plantings. With combined efforts by the City and West Lafayette Tree Friends, there were nearly 500 trees planted within the city's streets. Along with Operation Releaf plantings, other city projects aided in this year's tree plantings. Those projects include the CSO project along South River Road, Blackbird Farms, Sagamore Parkway, Farmers Market Improvements, and other development projects. A breakdown of this year's plantings are as follows:

## **Spring 2016:**

1. **Operation Releaf**-112 trees were planted. Funding sources were WREC's \$11250 grant for Blackbird Farms and 50/50 City EDIT funds and West Lafayette Tree Friends
  - a. **Tribute Trees**- From the 112 trees planted as part of Operation Releaf, a total of 7 tribute trees were planted, paid for by tribute tree donations
  - b. **Tree Trial Trees**-From the 112 trees from Operation Releaf, 7 were planted as part of the Tree Trial on Kalberer Road.
2. **South River Road Planting**-60 trees were planted south of the railroad overpass. Funding sources include WREC's \$7800 grant and 50/50 from City EDIT funds and West Lafayette Tree Friends
  - a. **Arbor Day**- 16 of the total 60 trees were planted in honor of both Arbor Day and the bicentennial year for the State of Indiana. Those 16 trees were recognized as a Bicentennial Legacy Project.

## **Fall of 2016:**

1. **Operation Releaf**- 63 trees were planted. Funding sources were 50/50 City EDIT funds and West Lafayette Tree Friends

- a. **Tribute Trees**-From the 63 trees from Operation Releaf, a total of 2 tribute trees were planted, paid for by tribute donation funds
  - b. **Founders Day**-From the 63 trees from Operation Releaf, 1 trees was planted in the Tree Trial plantings on Kalberer Road
2. **Urban Revitalization Project: Sagamore Parkway Replanting**- 65 trees were planted along Sagamore Parkway. Funding came from the Redevelopment Commission for ash tree removal (112 were removed) and replacement trees that were planted this fall. Another 50 trees will be planted in spring 2017. This was immensely helpful to our budget as well as the street department's.
  3. **CSO Project**- 195 trees were planted as part of the CSO Engineering Department project along South River Road in engineered soils. These are the best soils any West Lafayette trees have ever seen.

### **Spring 2017:**

1. **Operation Releaf**-Currently there are 35 trees on the spring 2017 planting list. 17 of those will be funded by the CDBG program. More will be added over the next 2 months including plantings on Wilshire.

### **Future Projects:**

1. State Street—Trees in the Village will be planted in engineered soils. Trees will be planted every 40' on State and the Perimeter Parkway.
2. Urban Revitalization Project: Sagamore Parkway Replanting- Remaining 50 trees will be planted in the spring

The urban forestry intern for the Department of Development spent 657 hours accomplishing tasks within the urban forest. The West Lafayette Tree Friends pruned 1,384 trees between both spring and fall pruning schedules.

We are pleased to have a 2016 Nissan Frontier with the Tree Friends logo and eye-catching graphics for use by the Tree Friends and our Urban Forestry department, as well as a series of educational cards to leave with homeowners regarding water, mulch, stakes, pruning and general care.

This report focuses on the accomplishments of the city's urban forestry efforts but these are heavily augmented by the ongoing newsletter, watering, web site, Tribute Tree program, farmers' market booths, yarnbombing, social media posts and citizen relations—all undertaken by the Tree Friends—which make this one of the top Urban Forestry programs in the state. We're making a real impact on this community and having a good time in the process.

After 14 years, the title of Greenspace Administrator passes from Bev to Bryce. Bryce plans to involve more volunteers on weekends, remove maples from the approved tree list, inspect planned developments regularly for compliance with the original landscape plans, and more. The future of urban forestry is bright in West Lafayette!