

# URBAN FORESTRY—A STATE PERSPECTIVE<sup>1</sup>

by Jerry J. Presley

Urban Forestry has been practiced about as long as there has been a national forestry agency in this country. In 1910, the *American Forests* magazine contained an article entitled "A Forester Whose Field Is In the City." In the following years, people were involved in urban forestry activities, but it was not called urban forestry. The early workers were park managers, commercial arborists, landscape architects, and occasionally, foresters.

City forestry, or urban forestry, really picked up momentum as a result of the devastation caused by Dutch elm disease. Trees were sprayed, dead trees removed, and new trees were planted. Many cities started tree programs that involved a forestry department. Municipal tree ordinances were put in place and operating budgets were approved. As a result, better trees were planted in our cities, creating better cities for our living.

Max Peterson, Chief of the U.S. Forest Service, offered three reasons to be concerned about urban forestry:

- Because our cities and communities can and should be a source of local and national pride, a showcase for our culture.
- Because human beings, wherever they live or work, have a fundamental and heartfelt desire for a livable and aesthetic environment, whether manmade or natural.
- Because trees, urban parks, and green spaces can contribute a great deal in shaping urban environments which are livable, which grace their surroundings, and which build community pride.

The Forestry Division, Missouri Conservation Department, is doing a valuable program in urban forestry and in providing forestry assistance. Equally important, it is gaining an understanding and support for other Forestry Division programs in both urban and rural areas. Our urban forestry program started in St. Louis, Missouri. We started by providing the following services. We gave ad-

vice on tree care on an individual tree basis. We worked with commercial arborists and nurserymen. We assisted cities and towns within the greater St. Louis area. We made a special effort to educate absentee forest landowners.

After considerable success in the St. Louis Area, we expanded our services to Kansas City and then later to all communities with populations under 10,000. Under our current division organization, the entire state is served by professional personnel backed up by a professional central office staff.

Here are just a few examples of the assistance we provide:

- Shade tree assistance. Most often, our foresters are the local experts on pruning, pest identification and control, planting, and promotion of urban forestry.
- We work closely with commercial arborists. We meet with them regularly to become familiar with their services and equipment and assist them as needed with tree recommendations and special training sessions.
- Where a city or town forester exists, we work through these people to provide services to them.
- Many urban residents own forest and other land in rural areas and we make a special effort to work with these people through telephone calls, special mailings, and workshops.

Our programs are aided and supported by strong public relations efforts throughout the state, but particularly within our larger urban areas. We manage a number of urban forests in St. Louis, Kansas City, St. Joseph, and Springfield. Special management activities on these areas involve various forms of outdoor recreation, nature interpretation, hiking with special trails, management demonstrations, and samples of plantations and tree stand improvement. Our newest area is Burr Oak Woods near

1. Presented at the annual conference of the International Society of Arboriculture in Milwaukee in August 1985.

Kansas City. This area covers 1,066 acres and we have constructed a new nature center. The area and nature center is a showplace for our department.

A typical annual summary of our urban and community forestry property might tally up as follows:

1. Urban forestry assists	8,263
2. Urban areas assisted	641
3. Referrals to urban consultants	182
4. Educational seminars in urban areas	68
5. Community forestry plans	59

Nature Center activities:

1. Programs to groups	500
2. Individuals and random visitors	83,000
3. Total people contacted	101,000

Where are we going with our program in Missouri? Many state and municipal governments are in difficult financial shape. Public dollars have to be allocated according to need and the need for roads, police forces, crime prevention, and health programs are all important. Forestry programs at the state level generally suffer budget reductions comparable to other state agencies, providing non-critical services. Yet, our forestry program in Missouri is on a relatively stable funding base as a result of a special sales tax approved by the people of Missouri. Still, we have to justify current expenses and new proposed programs.

In our long-range planning efforts, the following were proposed as things we might be able to do in future years:

- Open our field offices on Saturday. This would accommodate the Monday-Friday worker.
- Expand our programs for urban people and absentee forest owners.
- Encourage community groups to use our offices and meeting facilities and promote greater contact with tree boards, park boards, and local community leaders.
- Initiate a matching money program for cities. This program would assist with community tree expenses and, hopefully, encourage more funding for cities for trees.
- Assist counties in preparing county-wide forestry plans to enhance planning for trees on a regional or county basis.
- Employ at least two additional urban foresters to provide more assistance to medium and small communities.

It may take us several years to start these new or expanded services, and a major factor will be funding. However, we don't consider our work in urban forestry completed because we still have much we can do.

To keep our statewide urban forestry program alive and well we need to continue our activity in three priority areas.

*Citizen involvement.* We need to continue our work with park boards, city councils, beautification committees, and neighborhood associations. People are our customers and they must buy our product and put it to good use. For example, the City of Ellisville, a suburb of St. Louis, used our plan for a planting project at a neighborhood park and used it to promote the purchase of additional land. Now this area is the biggest park owned by the city.

In Jefferson City, our State Capitol, forestry personnel provided advice on tree planting for the downtown business district. Now several streets are planted, with tree branches forming a complete canopy across some streets. Local residents and visitors to the State Capitol can enjoy the beautiful downtown area.

On Arbor Day, commercial arborists and nurserymen, park boards, garden clubs, youth groups, and student organizations have assisted in our annual distribution of seedlings for Arbor Day. These people are an important part of the overall success of the Arbor Day activity. This program generates local interest and support for city tree programs.

We are recruiting volunteers at our urban forests. These volunteers assist with our naturalist's activities. We would like to approach the community nature center concept, where people regard the nature center as theirs.

*Managing neighborhood trees.* We want to emphasize that local neighborhoods dictate the degree of tree concern, and must be willing to support related expenses. We find that homesites are being purchased with a much greater regard for the existing trees as well as those in neighboring yards. We also know that neighborhood groups will support city funded tree programs and this support must be maintained.

*Relate trees to people.* We must continue to educate people on tree values for shade, screen-

ing, urban wildlife, and increased land value. We feel that the urban wildlife aspect is very important and much can be done in this regard. The planting of a few selected trees and shrubs in urban backyards can provide a great deal of food and cover for urban wildlife.

In summary, we feel urban forestry in Missouri is a vital part of our overall forestry program. By working with people and the trees in urban areas, we improve living conditions within the cities. We also influence urban people in matters of com-

munity involvement, public agency programs, and even in the votes they cast. Probably, the main ingredient is citizen involvement. We need more of this in Missouri and you probably need it in your cities and states. I would encourage you to work toward that end.

*State Forester  
Missouri Department of Conservation  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102*

---

## Abstract

SEMEL, MAURIE. 1985. **Proper pesticide use doesn't end in the field.** *Am. Nurseryman* 161(12): 39, 42-45, 48-50, 52, 54-55.

Properly used, pesticides permit the production of clean, healthy, vigorous, and aesthetically pleasing plants. Proper use, however, does not end with spraying in the field. Safe storage of these chemicals is as essential as safe application. Because of the great variability in pesticides, including their chemical compositions and formulations, specific storage instructions are not required on the label by federal regulation. However, all registered pesticides must include up-to-date storage and disposal statements. These statements must be set apart and clearly distinguishable from other directions for use. As a general rule, pesticides should not be stored longer than two years, although many will last indefinitely under proper storage conditions. Generally, insecticides, fungicides, nematocides, and rodenticides may be stored in the same room or cabinet. Herbicides, on the other hand, are apt to contaminate other chemicals or supplies by the emission of certain volatile components or by physical contact. Conditions most likely to affect pesticide shelf life are excessive heat or cold and high humidity. Local building and zoning regulations should be consulted before embarking on any new construction or modifying an existing structure.