



## State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
NEW JERSEY FOREST SERVICE  
MAIL CODE 501-04  
PO BOX 420  
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0420  
TEL: 609-292-2532 FAX: 609-984-0378

AUG - 9 2019

PHILIP D. MURPHY  
*Governor*

SHEILA Y. OLIVER  
*Lt. Governor*

CATHERINE R. McCABE  
*Commissioner*

July 23, 2019

Kevin Sluka  
Borough of Somerville  
25 West End Avenue  
Somerville, NJ 08876

Transmitted via email: [ksluka@somervillenj.org](mailto:ksluka@somervillenj.org)

Dear Mr. Sluka:

Congratulations! On behalf of New Jersey Forest Service (NJFS), I am pleased to inform you that Somerville's fourth 5-year Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP) is approved for 2019 - 2023.

A NJFS approved CFMP is an essential guide to successfully achieving a healthy, safe, and sustainable community forest. It is also the first step toward compliance with the Shade Tree and Community Forestry Assistance Act. Compliance affords New Jersey's communities increased liability protection under the Tort Claims Act. The next step toward compliance is participation in the training program. For more details go to [www.communityforestry.nj.gov](http://www.communityforestry.nj.gov).

If you are a participant in the Green Communities grant program, NJFS will follow-up with you on the documentation required for the reimbursement request.

Please find enclosed the certificate of approval, and a signed plan certification by the State Forester within your management plan.

Sincerely,

Carrie A. Sargeant  
Urban & Community Forestry Coordinator

Encl. (2)

eCC: Dennis Sullivan; Zina Van Ness; Carrie Sargeant, NJFS; Patricia Shapella, NJFS

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
New Jersey State Forestry Services

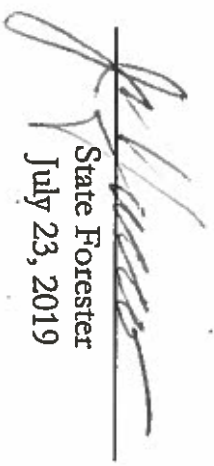
*Hereby presents the*

# *Certificate of Approval*

awarded to

## *Borough of Somerville*

*For the successful completion of an approved  
4<sup>th</sup> 5-year Community Forestry Management Plan in accordance with the  
New Jersey Shade Tree and Community Forestry Assistance Act,  
P.L. 1996, Chapter 135.*

  
State Forester  
July 23, 2019

# Municipal/County Information Form

Municipality BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE

County COUNTY OF SOMERSET


Address 25 WEST END AVENUE, SOMERVILLE, NEW JERSEY 08876

Contact Name and Title KEVIN SLUKA, ADMINISTRATOR

Phone # 908-725-2300 X-1983

Fax # and E-mail 908-725-2859 KSLUKA@SOMERVILLENJ.ORG

Organization Name BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE

Mayor's Signature 

Date of Management Plan Submission JANUARY 14, 2019, Resubmission April 8, 2019, Resubmission July 16, 2019

Time Period Covered in Management Plan JANUARY 1, 2019 – DECEMBER 31, 2023

Community Stewardship Incentive Program(CSIP) Practices Identified in Management Plan

- CSIP #1 Training
- CSIP #2 Community Forestry Ordinance Establishment
- CSIP #3 Public Education and Awareness
- CSIP #4 Arbor Day
- CSIP #5 Tree Inventory
- CSIP #6 Hazard Tree Assessment
- CSIP #7 Storm Damage Assessment
- CSIP #8 Tree Maintenance and Removals
- CSIP #9 Insect and Disease Management
- CSIP #10 Wildfire Protection
- CSIP #11 Tree Planting
- CSIP #12 Tree Recycling
- CSIP #13 Sidewalk Maintenance Program
- CSIP #14 Storm Water Management
- CSIP #15 Other

**Official Use Only Certification**

The above named municipality/county has made formal application to the New Jersey Forestry Service. I am pleased to advise you that after our review, the NJ Forestry Service has concluded that this plan meets the standards set forth by the State and the NJ Community Forestry Council and is approved for the period covered.

Signed

  
State Forester

7/23/19  
Approved Date

# **The Borough of Somerville**

## **Community Forestry Management Plan**

**Fourth Management Plan**

**January 1, 2019 -  
December 31, 2023**

**Prepared by:**

**Somerville Environmental Commission  
25 West End Avenue  
Somerville, NJ 08876**

**Prepared for:**

**New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection  
Division of Parks and Forestry  
New Jersey Forest Service  
501 East State Street  
P.O. Box 404  
Trenton, NJ 08625**

## **2. Introduction**

### **A. Mission Statement**

The Borough of Somerville plans to work to achieve an urban forest that is well-stocked, safe, healthy, diverse, aesthetically pleasing, and functional. The Borough will provide for the pleasure and safety of residents and visitors by maintaining the tradition of tree-lined streets and by acting as stewards of the urban forest. With the planning proposed within this Community Forestry Management Plan and guided by our Street Tree Inventory, Somerville will continue to address the street tree vacancies that currently exist within the Borough while also replacing storm damaged trees in parklands.

### **B. Goals and Objectives**

#### **Goal**

- Maximize borough tree care within budgetary constraints and community benefits.

#### **Objectives**

- Maintain effective municipal tree care through training, planning, and scheduling.
- Increase communication with borough council, municipal administrator and department heads to assure proper tree installations, care, and replacements.
- Provide public programs and information regarding tree care and maintenance through workshops and events that focus on tree care, planting needs, benefits, and pruning.
- Mitigate borough tree hazards as related to tree age, conditions, and disease.

#### **Goal**

- Support the training of volunteers and employees in the management and maintenance of borough trees.

#### **Objectives**

- Meet the annual Community Forestry training requirements.
- Seek on site or regional trainings in subject relevant to issues in town.
- Target community groups for volunteer participation and training options.

#### **Goal**

- Increase public awareness regarding the benefits of trees and solicit participation in their care and planting.

#### **Objectives**

- Foster interest and education among the citizens of Somerville regarding trees and the urban forest through programs and events.
- Continue development of educational outreach programs and collaborative programs with other agencies.
- Continue volunteer tree planting programs and maintenance of the town tree arbor.

#### **Goal**

- Establish and fulfill a borough street tree planting plan.

#### **Objectives**

- Obtain new funding and sources for trees, planting, and maintenance.

- Continue to plant street trees in the vacant sites identified in the Street Tree Inventory with appropriate and diversified species (smaller stature trees under utility lines or in smaller planting strips, larger stature trees in larger planting strips with no overhead obstructions).
- Maintain tree species diversity so that losses of a predominant species through senescence, disease or pestilence are minimized in the future.
- Investigate updating the borough tree inventory.

**Goal**

- Encourage the planting and proper stewardship of trees on private property and within the downtown special improvement district.

**Objectives**

- Determine, with municipal officials, a borough process and protocols for the removal, planting, and maintenance of trees on private, public and special improvement district properties.
- Advocate for and serve as the community watch dog to ensure process and policies are followed as well as best practices for tree planting.

**Goal**

- Ensure that employees working with trees, and property owners are familiar with the Emerald Ash Borer

**Objectives**

- Educate employees and the public utilizing the State of New Jersey Emerald Ash Borer Kit
- Placing posters at public library and DPW
- Having employees read the Fact Sheet
- Engaging Tree experts contractually to be contacted if needed.

**C. Liability Statement**

Adherence to this management plan is expected to reduce liability claims against Somerville. It is the duty of the Borough to inspect and maintain vigilance in removing damaged and diseased trees. While Somerville has a limited budget, not every need may be addressed immediately. Therefore, available resources must be placed on reducing the most public, dangerous hazards. Instituting a plan to identify prioritize, and manage tree hazards that will maximize the benefits of trees while mitigating public safety is recommended.

Whereas no maintenance program can predict each tree failure before it occurs, the Borough of Somerville is expected to reduce exposure to liabilities by reducing significantly the occurrence of tree-related accidents. This plan is a commitment to managing risks associated with trees in public spaces.

**3. Community Overview – Five Years of Progress**

The Borough of Somerville is a community bordering the Raritan River in Somerset County, New Jersey. With a population of approximately 12,000, the Borough serves as the County seat and includes the historic Somerset County Court House and a traditional "downtown" area along Main Street. Public transportation is provided by New Jersey Transit's Raritan Valley rail line with a station in the downtown area. Somerville, together with Bridgewater and Raritan, has been

designated as a Regional Center pursuant to the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

The western end of town is home to large historic houses with wide streets and relatively wide tree planting strips. Many of the older, large trees that used to line the streets here have been removed over the years and replacement has not kept up with removal. Trees in the downtown area have been pruned in the past 5 years. A Treescape Plan for Main Street has been a point of controversy for the past 5 years between the Downtown Somerville Alliance and Environmental Commission. New Main Street construction requires tree replacements but enforcement has lacked. The Alliance has received funding for tree replacement and hazardous trees have been prioritized for removal. Three trees were removed in October 2018 and replaced in late November.

The north, east and southern parts of town are generally younger than the downtown and western portions of Borough and tend to have smaller planting strips and less room for large trees between the sidewalk and curb. As in the older parts of town, replacement has not kept up with removal and loss in these areas as well. Generally, street trees have been planted between the sidewalk and the curb.

Current tree related issues included sidewalks and the emerald ash borer. Sidewalks and trees have been a controversial issue the past years. Heaved sidewalks that pose a tripping hazard are a problem in the Borough. This is a common problem in communities and has several methods to address it. The most common and least desirable method of dealing with roots lifting sidewalks is to grind or cut roots and pour a new concrete slab. This process can kill the tree outright, or cause the tree to topple by physical loss of support or the introduction of decay fungi into the root system which reduces physical support in the near future. Another method of addressing the problem is to curve the sidewalk around the base of the tree avoiding most of the major support roots. This method can be better than just cutting roots close to the trunk but still has some damage to the root system.

Some municipalities object to the sidewalk not being straight, especially if it must go off the right-of way to pass the tree. If the sidewalk width must be narrowed when curving around the tree, it should be noted that the minimum width to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act is 36 inches. Other considerations are discussed in:

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle\\_pedestrian/publications/sidewalks/chap4a.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/sidewalks/chap4a.cfm)

In areas where the lifted edge of the concrete is less than 2 inches it is possible to use concrete grinding to eliminate the tripping hazard. Some municipalities have their own concrete grinding machine and it may be possible to barter services if the Borough is interested in trying this method. Another method of dealing with heaved concrete slabs is to replace the slab with concrete pavers or bricks that can be laid to bridge over the top of roots. The appeal of pavers is that they can be sloped to go over surface roots much more easily than can concrete. The incline would be no more than that of a handicap ramp at a street corner. Maintenance of pavers could also entail picking out the offending pavers and either adjusting the stone dust base or cutting the paver to a thickness where it will be even. Maintenance of street trees and sidewalks need attention.

All species of ash are in peril of attack and death by the invasive Emerald Ash Borer that has now arrived in New Jersey. Plans for how to effectively manage this impending scenario are

imperative and need action.

Achievements of following the initial Community Forestry Management Plan include:

- Street tree vacancies continue to be filled by tree planting grants, street improvement projects, and responses to requests from homeowners. In 1999, Somerville completed a street tree inventory that identified a vacancy rate of 56%. Somerville has made great strides. The town is beginning to restore the urban forest, planting trees using State grants and as part of road improvement projects. The previous, vacancy rate was approximately 45%. A current inventory does not exist.
- Shared expertise with the Borough and DSA on tree species selection for street improvement projects (repaving, curb and sidewalk replacements).
- Provided quarterly outreach events, programs, and trainings.
- Held annual Arbor Day tree events including free tree seedling giveaways and free resident dig outs of larger trees in tree arbor.
- Led the maintenance of the town tree nursery which was established in parkland through the collaborative efforts of local Girl Scouts, Recreation and Environmental Commission, and Department of Public Works.
- Facilitated the removal and transplant of trees from the nursery into parks.
- Successfully used the nursery as community project that supports public education and serves to grow trees to replant in town.
- Planted 200-300 willow tree stakes annually for the past 3 years into Peter's Brook with the NJ Watershed and local scouts.
- The Borough met the training requirements as specified under the NJ Community Forestry Act and maintained approved status each year.
- Obtained an Environmental Commission web page to provide information.
- Coordinated with the planning board so that requirements to plant trees with new development projects were met.

These achievements correspond well with the goals and objectives and implementation timeline of the original plan. In some areas we have exceeded our goals. A highlight has been the increase in community involvement and volunteers which have resulted in meaningful projects.

Time and money are common problems encountered in implementing elements of the Plan. Our Commission's work in municipal environmental issues has also divided our time.

We have been more successful in reaching the public as we have targeted communications and involvement with community groups such as the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, school groups, Recreation Department and sports leagues who use the parks. It is important to be realistic about what can be proposed and accomplished successfully so we continue to focus on collaborative efforts. Somerville's Plan is implemented by a volunteer organization, the Environmental Commission, with assistance of, primarily, the Borough DPW. We have incorporated into the Plan activities that have been successful and an emphasis on continued tree planting. Our most important goal continues to be tree planting and advocating for the preservation and replacement of aging trees.

The Community Forestry Management Plan has been a stand-alone document. However, the



implementation of the plan will occur throughout the public lands of the Borough including public right-of ways, parks, and other open spaces. It complements the Master Plan, focusing on the re-establishment of street trees as recommended in the Master Plan for "gateway" streets into the Borough. For example, one of the key recommendations under the Recreation / Conservation heading within the Community Facilities Plan is:

"A comprehensive street shade tree program along major roadways within the borough, such as Union Avenue, Bridge Street, and Gaston Avenue, in order to enhance the image and environmental quality of these road corridors."

This recommendation is reiterated within the Recreation / Open Space Recommendations section of the Improvement Sub-Plans:

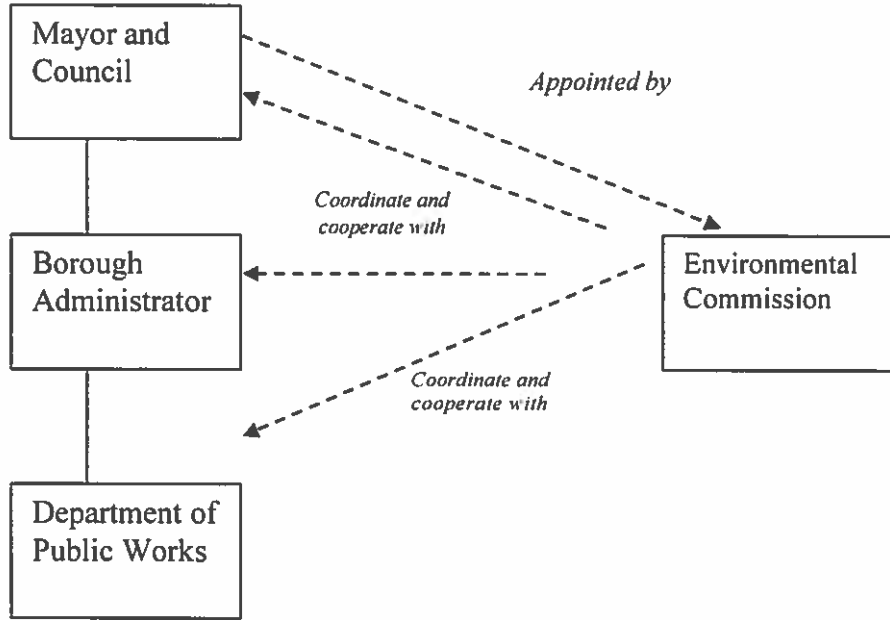
"Support the borough's Shade Tree Commission's [sic] efforts to provide shade trees on major roadways within the community, such as Union Avenue, Bridge Street, and Gaston Avenue, in order to enhance the image and environmental quality of these areas."

The link between the Community Forestry Master Plan and the Municipal Master Plan has not changed. The Community Forestry Master Plan remains a stand-alone document that is not referenced in the Municipal Master Plan. Recent advocacy work on preserving the Main Street Tree Scape has been gaining the attention of business leaders and borough council.

#### **4. Community Forestry Program Administration**

Management of the Borough's shade trees has been through the Department of Public Works with oversight by the Borough Administrator. The volunteer-staffed Environmental Commission provides input to the Mayor, Borough Council, and Administrator. As of 2018 the members of the Environmental Commission include: Gina Stravic, Chair, Timothy Hayes, Vice Chair, Sandra Benscoter, Secretary, Katherine Hughes, Landscape Architect, Vijay Tulsani, Matthew Goldin, Neil Morgan, Larry Cleveland, Planning Board Representative, and Granville Brady, Council Liaison. The Borough Administrator is Kevin Sluka, and the Department of Public Works is presently led by Rodney Hadley.

**Organizational Chart**



Requests for tree service or complaints about trees are forwarded to the Director of the Department of Public Works. The director then assigns a foreman to investigate the complaint. If work is required, it is done in-house unless it is beyond the capabilities of the DPW, in which case it is contracted to a professional tree service. This plan is in accordance with the current Shade Tree Ordinance.

#### **Plans to Improve Program Administration**

Due to controversial tree removals the Environmental Commission may look to solve such problems through a proposed revised chain of command or new ordinance. The commission has regular communication with the Borough Administrator who brokers the work or directions of the Environmental Commission. We have been interacting with the mayor and council, presenting to the planning board, and seek to meet with the business district groups and look to strengthen relationships and build understanding of trees as a necessity and resource in town. We have a representative from the planning board and a council member liaison on the environmental commission. This is effective in adding new trees in town when new development occurs and/or a payment to the tree account.

### **5. Community Map (See Attached Map)**

### **6. Training Plan**

**Training overview:** Training needs for volunteers center on their advisory role (plus a practical but nonprofessional role in minor tree pruning and maintenance of natural areas). Employees of the Department of Public Works (DPW) do some minor pruning and removals. Work beyond the skills and equipment of the DPW will be contracted out.

**Core training and continuing education units (CEU's):** One current Environmental Commissioner and one Borough employee have completed core training. CEU requirements have been met by attendance at the NJ Shade Tree Federation annual meeting. For the past 2 years we have contracted a certified tree expert to come to Somerville and walk areas with Commission members. In this way more members have annually have obtained required CEU's. Technical training needs include: planting, pruning, urban soils, hazard tree identification, tree care disaster planning, sidewalk/tree conflicts, tree selection, soil amendments, and root barriers.

**Public employees responsible for tree maintenance:** The personnel responsible for planting trees have been trained in proper planting techniques by a Certified Tree Expert or certification courses as part of the tree planting grants received from the Division of Parks and Forestry. The Borough Administrator has attended ANJEC courses that have included "Complying with Stormwater Regulations" and "Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions". Both the DPW Director and the Administrator have a CPWM license in which they attend such courses as part of Continuing Education credits.

As part of the training efforts, the Borough's DPW staff was provided the Fact Sheets on Emerald

Ash Borer from the New Jersey State, Division of Agricultural. Each employee that performs tree work for the borough is required to maintain the fact sheet in their vehicle. A poster is located in the Department of Public Works as an awareness reminder. The Borough has the immediate ability to contract with tree experts and appropriate consultants. A list of experts is maintained by the Department of Public Works.

### *Needs*

Obtain training for appropriate DPW / Engineering staff to fully access and utilize data in the Street Tree Inventory to aid in planning of tree pruning, removal or planting.

The Commission will review the NJ Forest Service's Community Forestry Program book of guidelines as well as reviewing website.

- Revised street tree ordinance.
- Maintain/replace street trees with public outreach by notifying homeowners of street tree installation, tree care, and the benefits of trees.
- Apply for the Tree Planting Grant administered by the NJDEP Division of Parks and Forestry, as available.
- Have another Environmental Commissioner receive core training.
- Expand the number of Environmental Commissioners trained in tree care.
- Provide another pruning workshop for DPW personnel.
- Staff and volunteer resources to seek donations and grants for tree purchases.

The Borough maintains a training budget that can be used to meet certain of these needs. Others, such as making application for Tree Planting Grants, will be met by the volunteer efforts of the Environmental Commission.

## **7. Public Education/Awareness/Outreach**

Public Education, Awareness and Outreach are the most vital portion of this plan and the cornerstone for a successful program. The overall goal is to enhance the community's awareness of the community forest and the value and benefits of maintaining and improving trees and respecting them as a resource. With increased awareness and participation come improved volunteer recruitment, more successful activities, and ultimately a more successful Community Forestry Program. Public education projects and workshops will be coordinated with the Borough Administration, collaboratively among town groups. Awareness will also be increased at annual EC educational events and through media releases. Annually an accomplishment report will be presented to the Mayor and Council to further highlight Environmental Commission accomplishments.

As part of its Comprehensive Management Plan, the Borough intends to continue its practice of public education, community programs, and collaborative projects related to community and its trees in order to involve the residents in the implementation of this plan. This includes programs, media communications, and outreach to groups.

The Commission can educate residents in this regard to keep storm drains clear.

Additionally, the Environmental Commission will continue working with NJ Water Supply, Rutgers, and town officials to support rain barrel use and rain gardens with small trees and bushes that aid in absorbing storm water run-off. Willow tree stakes have been planted in stream beds with NJ Water Authority assistance and funding.

#### **Programs**

1. Community tree transplanting and pruning workshops have been conducted.
2. The Borough also has a Memorial Tree program in cooperation with the Recreation Department.
3. The Environmental Commission sponsors an annual Earth Day clean-up at various Borough locations with tree seedlings give-a-ways from the Arbor Day Foundation.

#### **Media Communications**

1. Notifications to homeowners who are to receive new street trees are by letter and follow up phone call. An instructional flyer on how to care for their tree is provided.
2. The use of the local Ville TV and scout groups has been established to convey information.
3. A kiosk in a local park contains environmental commission messaging and education flyers.

#### **Outreach to Groups**

1. Pruning newer trees being planted through volunteer efforts of environmental commissioners and residents. This provides an opportunity for community contact and reduces the work-load and cost to the Public Works Department.
2. A Girl Scout tree nursery was established in 2012 and is maintained in conjunction with parks department, scouts, and environmental commission to replace street tree vacancies.
3. Collaborations with local groups and municipal bodies including the Recreation, Planning Board, Public Works, District Management Association, school and scout groups. Specific goals for future public education and outreach efforts are listed in the Implementation Plan of this document.
4. Meetings with the district management corporation help educate on tree issues in the downtown district.

### **8. Statement of Tree Budget**

The Borough Council determines the budget each year. In general, the Borough does not have a specific tree budget. Most of the tree planting is done as part of capital projects for street repair and re-paving. Tree replacement is funded, in part, by grants received through the efforts of the Environmental Commission. In addition, the Commission voluntarily coordinates planting strategies, suggests tree species, prunes younger trees, and provides recommendations for maintenance. The Commission has approximately 8 active members and meets once a month for approximately 2 hours. Work related to trees constitutes approximately 10 or more hours per month. A tree planting budget line was established that is funded by Planning Board applicants who provide funds for tree planting when they are unable to plant a sufficient number of trees as part of their project. Currently, there is approximately \$13,000 in this account.

Somerville maintains equipment and staff to handle a significant amount of tree work annually.

The Borough has its own chipper, front-end loader, dump trucks, pickup trucks and various saws, safety saddles and ropes to perform tree work. Currently, the Borough expends approximately 3,500 man-hours, worth an estimated \$80,000, annually on planting, tree care, branch pick-up, and other tree-related work. This is in addition to approximately \$9,500 from the DPW budget used to hire outside contractors for pruning work on larger, more mature trees.

Also included in this budget is the weekly and annual tree recycling programs and door to door tree branch pick up. Somerville currently disposes of wood waste by grinding it up to make mulch or cutting it into firewood that is provided free to residents. Any excess wood waste is disposed of at the A.T.S. recycling/mulch facility in Bridgewater. There are contractors who will pick up sawlogs for no charge. However, the wood must be in long (24-foot) lengths and contain no metal staining or rot. Storage of these logs until they can be picked up may pose a logistical problem. Disposal of trees and wood primarily within the Borough is currently meeting the needs of Somerville.

The Borough also has a very reliable fall tree leaf pick up schedule that is maintained through the town budget. Residents are asked to put raked leaves to the curb so that they can be vacuumed into the Borough trucks for recycling. This prevents clogged storm water drains and related problems. The schedule is posted on the borough website, cable TV, etc.

The Borough will continue using Environmental Commissioners and volunteers to prune smaller street trees. In addition, they will continue to respond to resident tree requests, concerns, questions and issues with the removal of dying and hazardous trees. DPW's schedule of inspections and pruning of larger trees may be supported with contracted professionals when necessary. DPW will attach water bags to newly planted trees and maintain a schedule to fertilize, water, mulch, and prune trees in early years of growth. The commissioners will monitor and advocate for proper tree care in light of tight budgets and reduced allocation of staff time to tree care. The Environmental Commission will seek to revise the plans and processes to remove street trees in the next 5 years to assure unnecessary removal of our natural resources.

<b>Account Description</b>	<b>Control</b>	<b>Uses</b>	<b>Amount \$</b>
Tree Planting Program	Planning Board-Environmental Commission	Enables procurement of trees on public right of ways	\$13,000
Tree Maintenance	Department of Public Works	Chipping, tree trimming, planting	\$80,000
Contract Services	Department of Public Works	Large tree maintenance	\$9,500
Education	Environmental Commission	Coursework on tree identification and maintenance	\$300

## **9. Statement of Plan Implementation**

### ***Tree Inventory and/Assessment***

- Reduce vacant street tree sites to 10% or less over the next 10-30 years.
- Maintain tree species diversity so that losses of a predominant species through senescence, disease or pestilence are minimized in the future.
- Apply for available grant funding that supports tree assessments or programs to increase tree inventories.
- Collaborative with municipal and community groups to manage and maintain tree needs of the borough.
- The Street Tree Inventory originally completed in December 1999 needs to be updated. The commission desires to investigate new on line tools for maintaining its tree inventory.

### ***Hazard Identification and Management***

- Obtain new funding and sources for trees management and maintenance.
- Coordinate tree evaluations and maintenance priorities with public works.
- Recent concerns have been around the liability of protruding tree roots and sidewalks, causing controversial tree cuttings. The Environment Commission has taken an aggressive stance on protecting trees and solving root problems without removing trees. This is an issue we will continue to work on through the education, communication, passage of a new tree ordinance, and improved management.
- An annual inspection will be conducted by a foreman in the DPW to identify dead trees or other obvious hazard trees. In addition, all potential hazard trees listed in the

inventory will be inspected annually. These trees were not a hazard at the time of the inventory but contained large cut faces, cut roots or other signs that they may become hazardous in the near future. The department will continue to respond to resident complaints about trees that appear unhealthy or dangerous. The environmental commission will contribute assistance as requested or required.

### ***Tree Planting***

- Host an educational event annually that educates and involves regarding trees and the work of the Environmental Commission and target scout, school, YMCA and family groups.
- Conduct an Arbor Day program or event recognizing Arbor Day. Replicate past commemorative tree planting and tree seedling distribution or develop new educational programs.
- Make public presentation and report at borough council meeting to increase awareness of tree inventory and plantings.
- Organize a Borough tree planting project.
- Obtain new funding and sources for trees, planting, and maintenance.
- The Commission will target 25-50 trees planted annually to reduce vacancy levels unless programs are available for funded programs. Commissioners with expertise will make recommendations to various boards in town to assure that the proper type tree is planted in the designated areas. The commission will seek to plant 2 significant trees per year: memorial, anniversary, tribute, in featured area in town.

### ***Tree Maintenance and Care***

- Maintain tree nursery inventory and transplant to street locations.
- Maintain tree care educational information in the Exchange Field park kiosk.
- Update current tree inventory to include tree hazards identified/addressed and any trees planted/removed.
- Conduct tree pruning workshop(s) to prune smaller street trees.
- It may be necessary to control the outbreak of pests such as the Asian long-horned beetle. Management of the tree resource in a disaster will mean that some loss of control of private homeowners may be necessary to contain the disaster. For instance, in trying to prevent Dutch Elm disease from spreading to other susceptible elms it is necessary to remove infected individuals promptly whether they be on public or private property. The same concept is valid in an outbreak of the Asian long-horned beetle or some as yet unknown pestilence. This need will be provided for by the diversification of species within the borough.
- The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), being among the most destructive tree pests has been identified in the borough. Management options range from tree removal and various insecticides depending upon life stages of the EAB. However, the borough has only removed affected trees as of this date. The borough will place on its website links to various sites that provide information to the resident. In addition, all employees engaged with parkland and tree work will be trained for identification of the EAB.
- The Department of Public Works plans for the removal of downed wood resulting from ice



storms, violent thunderstorms, and hurricanes. The Environmental Commission can assist to identify damage and obtain volunteer help where appropriate. The Commission has led clean-up days has done so in the past after hurricanes.

- The Environmental Commission has been working with the Borough officials, Downtown Somerville Alliance (DSA) and others to resolve current sidewalk issues on Main Street including tree root liability in sidewalks, root grates, tree removals, replacements, and chain of commands for removing trees. Residents lack incentives to replace street trees due to root issues lawn maintenance and an overall lack of understanding regarding the benefits of trees.

### **Annual Plans for 2019-2023**

#### **2019**

- Discuss new shade tree ordinance.
- Continue work with District Management Association (DSA) to resolve Main Street tree issues.
- Survey the town trees for hazards and replacement needs. Make recommendations for removing high hazard tree based on their threat and identify new planting locations.
- Survey the town trees for hazards and replacement needs. Make recommendations for removing high hazard tree based on their threat and identify new planting locations.
- Submit for Sustainable New Jersey credits in the natural resources and tree categories. Increase outreach efforts by the posting and distribution of information concerning the community trees and resources through the town web site, email newsletter, park kiosk, and local TV station.
- Obtain required state forestry core training for another Environmental Commissioner/staff. Obtain required state forestry CEU's for Environmental Commission.
- Conduct annual Arbor Day program.
- Hold annual tree arbor event.
- Plant 50 trees towards goal of reducing tree vacancy.
- Seek tree donations, corporate and non-governmental grants.

## 2020

- Revisit updating tree inventory for town.
- Draft revised shade tree ordinance to borough for approval.
- Continue work with District Management Association to resolve Main Street tree issues.
- Survey the town trees for hazards and replacement needs. Make recommendations for removing high hazard tree based on their threat and identify new planting locations.
- Invite DPW Director to meetings, Borough walk through and events to heighten awareness.
- Increase outreach efforts by the posting and distribution of information concerning the community trees and resources through the town web site, email newsletter, park kiosk, and local TV station. Use outreach efforts to gain supporters and volunteers.
- Obtain required state forestry core training for another Environmental Commissioner/staff. Obtain annual required state forestry CEU's for Commissioners.
- Conduct annual Arbor Day program. Hold tree arbor maintenance work days.
- Plant 25 trees towards goal of reducing tree vacancy
- Seek tree donations and grants. Apply for available funding.
- Survey the town trees for hazards and replacement needs. Make recommendations for removing high hazard tree based on their threat and identify new planting locations.
- Work with Borough officials to assure proper treescapes at new development sites.

## 2021

- Continue work with District Management Association (DSA) to resolve Main Street tree issues.
- Survey the town trees for hazards and replacement needs. Make recommendations for removing high hazard tree based on their threat and identify new planting locations.
- Schedule annual town tree inspection with EC and DPW.
- Continue tree identification labeling along walking/bike path through a Scout project. Increase outreach efforts by the posting and distribution of information concerning the community trees and resources through the town web site, email newsletter, park kiosk, and local TV station.
- Obtain required state forestry core training for another Environmental Commissioner/staff.
- Obtain required state forestry CEU's for Environmental Commission.
- Seek tree donations and grants. Apply for available funding.
- Conduct annual Arbor Day program. Hold annual tree arbor event.
- Plant 50 trees towards goal of reducing tree vacancy level. Seek tree donations, corporate and non-governmental grants.
- Survey the town trees for hazards and replacement needs. Make recommendations

for removing high hazard tree based on their threat and identify new planting locations.

## 2022

- Revisit updating tree inventory for town.
- Draft revised shade tree ordinance to borough for approval.
- Continue work with District Management Association to resolve Main Street tree issues.
- Survey the town trees for hazards and replacement needs. Make recommendations for removing high hazard tree based on their threat and identify new planting locations.
- Invite DPW Director to meetings, borough walk through and events to heighten awareness.
- Increase outreach efforts by the posting and distribution of information concerning the community trees and resources through the town web site, email newsletter, park kiosk, and local TV station. Use outreach efforts to gain supporters and volunteers.
- Obtain required state forestry core training for another Environmental Commissioner/staff. Obtain annual required state forestry CEU's for Commissioners.
- Conduct annual Arbor Day program. Hold tree arbor maintenance work days.
- Plant 25-50 trees towards goal of reducing tree vacancy
- Seek tree donations and grants. Apply for available funding.
- Survey the town trees for hazards and replacement needs. Make recommendations for removing high hazard tree based on their threat and identify new planting locations.
- Update street tree inventory.
- Work with town officials to assure proper treescapes at new development sites.

## 2023

- Revisit updating tree inventory for town.
- Draft revised shade tree ordinance to borough for approval.
- Continue work with District Management Association to resolve Main Street tree issues.
- Survey the town trees for hazards and replacement needs. Make recommendations for removing high hazard tree based on their threat and identify new planting locations.
- Invite DPW Director to meetings, borough walk through and events to heighten awareness.
- Increase outreach efforts by the posting and distribution of information concerning the community trees and resources through the town web site, email newsletter, park kiosk, and local TV station. Use outreach efforts to gain supporters and volunteers.
- Obtain required state forestry core training for another Environmental Commissioner/staff. Obtain annual required state forestry CEU's for Commissioners.

- Conduct annual Arbor Day program. Hold tree arbor maintenance work days.
- Plant 25 trees towards goal of reducing tree vacancy
- Seek tree donations and grants. Apply for available funding.
- Survey the town trees for hazards and replacement needs. Make recommendations for removing high hazard tree based on their threat and identify new planting locations.
- Work with Borough officials to assure proper treescapes at new development sites.

## **10. Community Stewardship Incentive Program**

### **CSIP #1: Training – see section 6**

- CORE Training
- CEU Training
- Other elective Training above and beyond minimum required training
- Identification of Emerald Ash Borer – Public Employee

### **CSIP #2: Ordinance Establishment- see Section 4**

- Establishing Ordinance – establishes Shade Tree Commission
- Supplemental Ordinance - establishes Shade Tree Commission powers
- Tree Preservation Ordinance

### **CSIP #3: Public Education and Awareness- see Section 7**

- Outreach Events
- Outreach materials

### **CSIP #4: Arbor Day – see Section 9**

- Establishes or Expands Arbor Day Celebration

### **CSIP #5: Tree Inventory – see Section 9**

- Comprehensive Inventory of Street Trees

### **CSIP #6: Hazard Tree Assessment- see Section 9**

- Assessment of Tree Hazards

### **CSIP #7: Storm Damage Assessment- see Section 9**

- Pre-Storm assessment of potential damage to the tree resource after a severe storm

### **CSIP #8: Tree Maintenance and Removal- see Section 4 & 9**

- Pruning trees
- Removing trees
- Root Collar Excavations
- Fertilization
- Water
- Mulching

**CSIP #9: Insect and Disease Management- see Section 9**

- Managing Insect and Disease Problems - Community Forest Health*

**CSIP #10: Wildfire Protection**

- Wildlife Protection Plans*
- Firewise Communities*
- Species Selection and Fuel Reduction Programs*
- Fire Protected Related Outreach*

**Summary:** There is no current known plan for wildlife protection. Therefore the Somerville Environmental Commission will investigate needs pertinent to Somerville, research solutions, consult with our fire officials and determine the need to write a plan.

**CSIP #11: Tree Planting- see Section 9**

- Planting Trees – must remove wire baskets, quality planting stock, species selection*

**CSIP #12: Tree Recycling- see Section 8**

- Establish programs to recycle trees – free mulch from removed tree debris, Christmas Tree Recycling Program, Tree Removal Utilization Programs*

**CSIP #13: Sidewalk Maintenance Program- see Section 9**

- Promotes the establishment of a sidewalk maintenance program that encourages alternatives to tree removal through curbing and replacing sidewalks where appropriate*

**CSIP #14: Storm Water Management- see Section 8**

- Storm Water Management as it relates to Community Forestry – Leaf Pick Up Program*

**CSIP #15: Other**

- A Community Forestry practice that does not fit easily into one of the above practices but that can be justified as a valid community forestry practice*

There is no current known need for another plan not fitting any categories above.

**RESOLUTION 19-0114-051**

**ADOPTING COMMUNITY FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR  
JANUARY 1, 2019 TO DECEMBER 31, 2023**


**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Borough Council of the Borough of Somerville, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey hereby approve the New Jersey Community Forestry Management Plan prepared by Somerville Environmental Commission for the period of January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2023 and authorize the Mayor to execute said document.

Adopted by Borough Council on January 14, 2019

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk/Administrator

I, Kevin Sluka, Borough Clerk of the Borough of Somerville, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, hereby certify this to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Borough Council on January 14, 2019.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Sluka, Clerk/Administrator