

# Urban and Community Forestry Program 2016 Accomplishment Report – Indiana

## State Contact

Carrie Tauscher, Community and  
Urban Forestry Coordinator  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Forestry  
402 West Washington Street, Room W296  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
Phone: 317-234-4386  
Fax: 317-233-3863  
E-mail: [ctauscher@dnr.in.gov](mailto:ctauscher@dnr.in.gov)  
Web site:  
<http://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/2854.htm>

## State Forester

John Seifert  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Forestry  
402 West Washington Street, Room W296  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
Phone: 317-232-4116  
Fax: 317-233-3863  
E-mail: [jseifert@dnr.in.gov](mailto:jseifert@dnr.in.gov)  
Web site: <http://www.state.in.us/dnr/forestry>

## Introduction

The Community and Urban Forestry (CUF) program provides statewide leadership to increase public awareness of the value of trees within a community's urban natural resource. The CUF program assists and encourages Indiana communities in efforts to protect, expand, and improve the urban forests. This assistance takes the form of reducing the impacts of land use changes by preserving, conserving, and restoring the urban forest; developing urban forestry response plans; and strategically planting trees to aid in climate change and energy conservation issues. The program strives to help citizens make the connection between rural and urban forests and to incorporate the ideology that the urban forest is part of the community infrastructure. CUF achieves its mission by nurturing and forming a variety of partnerships throughout the State with its innovative grant programs and technical assistance.

## Key Accomplishments

### Churubusco, Indiana

Churubusco, population 1,791, first contacted CUF program managers in the fall of 2015. That winter they applied for and received a \$4,000 grant for tree planting. The community's Clerk Treasurer Madalyn Sade-Bartl and City Manager Jeremy Hart worked together on the community's first request for proposal for purchasing trees; they had trees planted and ready for inspection by June of 2016. The community has had very positive feedback on the project from residents and visitors.

Both Madalyn and Jeremy drove 3 hours to attend the August 2016 Indiana Community Tree Steward training, and each passed the final exam at the top of the class. Jeremy is looking into becoming an International Society of Arboriculture certified arborist. Churubusco would like to host Tree Steward Training of its own in 2017 with neighboring communities.

The town plans to review and update its vegetation ordinance to allow the community to better manage its trees. It has established a tree board and is reviewing its eligibility to become a Tree City USA.

Churubusco hosted the Little League junior state softball championship over the summer. The trees surrounding the fields brought compliments from parents and spectators and led to an extension in Churubusco's contract to host this event for future years.

Plans are in place to actively apply for more grants, continue planting, and help fund a tree inventory. The city is planning to plant trees in community parks with local school students to grow a stronger connection between youth and their community.



*Students from Mrs. Anderson's and Mrs. Ragan's third grade classes help in a Churubusco autumn tree planting event.*

### **Shelbyville, Indiana**

The city of Shelbyville reached out to its citizens in February 2014. There was a good conversation about municipal challenges and citizen expectations, the potential of a new community park, and what first steps could look like. One participant at this meeting, Kris Schwickrath, would ultimately play a critical role in moving Shelbyville forward.

After only a few months, the city's MS4 Coordinator Derrick Eberly attended a Tree Steward training session and started to become more engaged. He supported a tree planting project at the newly formed city park and held a followup meeting with the CUF program to learn more about trees in the park and how emerald ash borer might impact the community.

Shortly after this meeting, the community started to connect the dots, realizing that tree planting could improve water quality and community condition. They began planning for tree planting along one of the community's newest parkways.

In the spring of 2016 Shelbyville hosted a weeklong Arbor Day event that included planting trees with students at all of the schools, a poster contest for three grades that resulted in hundreds of participants, and an enormous celebration at the community park. The Lieutenant Governor attended and spoke about the importance of trees in Indiana. Indiana Department of Natural Resources Director Caron Clark and State Forester John Seifert also attended with representatives from the Indiana Hardwood Lumberman's Association. Students visited educational stations that included the following: a stop in the woods addressing trees as habitat and measuring trees, a stop talking about the benefits of trees in communities and "what trees give us," finding the root flare as part of a tree planting, and planting seedlings into grow bags for the community's first tree



*Students from Shelbyville High School finish lining out native tree seedlings in grow bags as part as the city's newly developing tree nursery.*

nursery as part of the local high school's AP biology class. After the program each school received a seedling from the DNR Tree Seedling nursery for every student and teacher. Teachers received posters depicting trees for bees.



*Hundreds of posters made by second to fifth grade students lined the walls of the Shelbyville Park Pavilion. Winners were posted on the windows, and visitors were invited in to view all posters.*



The community continues to move forward. After Arbor Day, Kris found an inventory of street trees done several years earlier stashed in the back of the city council closet. The ash portion of the inventory was updated by citizens block by block. The benefits and costs to treat or remove [ash trees] were analyzed. That report and many newspaper articles led to the city council allocating funds to treat ash trees on public property and planting street trees.

## City Forester/Arborist Position Retention in Indiana Municipalities

Of the 567 cities and towns in Indiana, 71 have professional staff that manage their city's trees. Only 27 of those communities have a dedicated city forester or city arborist position. Between January 1, 2016, and September 30, 2016, five of those communities lost their city forester. In each of those communities, the position was rehired; an additional community, Plymouth, has added a city arborist position. This may seem small, but it is a huge accomplishment considering that many Indiana communities are still looking to find ways to cut and balance budgets.

### Muncie, Indiana

Urban Forestry Specialist [Lindsey Purcell](#) hosted a free educational session for tree care professionals in Muncie, IN, upon the request of City Arborist Kellie McCellan. Tree care companies were encouraged to participate if they had not attended a tree care workshop or similar professional development opportunity within the last 2 years. Attendance at this course allowed their companies to meet requirements for obtaining their annual Arborist License, which is required of all tree care professionals for hire in the city.

The city currently has 26 licensed arborists. Knowing initially that not every company would invest in having ISA-certified arborists, especially for removal companies, the City Arborist worked to determine a certain level of knowledge, safety, and accountability that seemed both reasonable to the city council and would better the practice of tree care throughout the municipality.

This licensure has become even more critical as the city of Muncie enters the peak of ash mortality by the emerald ash borer. Dead and dying ash trees become increasingly dangerous and can be quite challenging to remove in a safe way. The licensing is also important because the city itself does not have a tree crew for removals. The City Arborist does all she can with a temporary seasonal position to aid her, but large jobs are contracted out to local companies.

In addition to a fairly progressive licensure program and an extremely dedicated City Arborist and tree board, the city of Muncie hosts a large Arbor Day program each spring that includes giving away hundreds of native tree seedlings with species and planting information. The celebration includes an Arbor Fair with children's activities, Ball State students planting trees, tree tags that show the economic value of each tree, and a slew of tree experts to answer local residents' tree questions. This is all capped off by the reading of the city's Arbor Day Proclamation and raising of the flag. It is one of Indiana's most comprehensive, inclusive, and well-attended Arbor Day events. Despite the city's economic and resource challenges, Muncie has had one of the most consistent and forward-thinking urban forestry programs in the State.

### Statistical Highlights

Managing Communities:	55
Developing Communities:	40
Population of Participating Communities:	3,128,376
Volunteer Assistance Generated (hours):	13,330

