



# Valuing Our Trees:

## An East Hills Urban Forest Plan



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# Foreword

## Why We're Paying Attention to Trees in East Hills

What makes East Hills special? Involved neighbors, great housing stock, thriving business districts—and trees! The trees on our streets and in our parks, public spaces and yards play a vital role in the health and economic vitality of our neighborhood. Trees improve the quality of our air and water, reduce our energy costs, increase our property values, and make our neighborhood a more attractive, walkable and desirable place to live, work, and shop.

Our urban forest is a valuable asset. We can maximize the benefits of our investments in trees by preserving and enhancing our urban forest—taking good care of our existing trees and planting more trees so that we continue to have a thriving green canopy.

East Hills is committed to being a green, sustainable neighborhood. That's why we're paying attention to our urban forest—and why we've recently completed an inventory of our street and park trees and developed an urban forest plan for the neighborhood.

We invite you to join us in our efforts. You can learn more about the street trees on your block by checking out the tree map on the East Hills web site, [www.easthillscouncil.org](http://www.easthillscouncil.org). You can learn about our urban forest plan in this report. You can join the East Hills Tree Team and/or get answers to questions about trees by calling the East Hills Council of Neighbors, 454-9079.

And don't forget to take good care of your street trees and the trees in your yard. Proper mulching and regular watering are vital. Your trees need your help!

Thank you for helping make East Hills a great, green neighborhood!

Ted Lott

Chair, Board of Directors  
East Hills Council of Neighbors

## Using the East Hills Tree Map and Inventory

### The Tree Map

The East Hills Tree Map provides detailed information about each street and park tree in the neighborhood. The map can be accessed at the East Hills web site, [www.easthillscouncil.org](http://www.easthillscouncil.org) (click on East Hills Trees and then on Tree Map). Both map and satellite (aerial) views are available.

To find out about a particular tree, click on the icon at the appropriate street location. Information provided for each tree includes its species, height, diameter, age, condition, value, tag number, street address and map coordinates, as well as any tree maintenance issues, such as pruning or removal needs.

### The Street Tree Inventory

The foundation for the Tree Map and the East Hills Urban Forest Plan is a street tree and park inventory conducted by Bartlett Tree Experts with the help of neighborhood volunteers. The 151-page inventory report includes a list of all street and park trees, with the information described above. The inventory also includes a list of all spaces available for planting street trees, including recommended size, tag number, and address.

The inventory includes maps showing:

- All street and park trees
- Trees by age class
- Trees by condition class
- Unoccupied tree planting spaces
- Trees recommended for structure evaluations
- Trees by pruning priority class
- Trees recommended for root collar excavation
- Ash tree locations

Also included in the inventory are technical reports on

- Emerald ash borer
- Maintenance pruning standards
- Root collar disorders
- Tree structure evaluation
- Structural pruning of young trees
- Disease resistant elm recommendations
- Mulch application guidelines
- New concepts in tree planting

For information about how to access the inventory report, contact the East Hills Council of Neighbors, 616-454-9079.

# Executive Summary

## Background

The East Hills neighborhood has a long history of grassroots activism, public-private partnerships, and involvement in environmental issues—all encouraged and supported by the neighborhood association, the East Hills Council of Neighbors. In 2006 neighborhood residents in the Fairmount Square area initiated a major tree planting initiative, planting 44 street trees in a two-year period.

Building on this tree planting work, neighborhood residents identified the need for an inventory of the neighborhood's public trees to evaluate the current status of the existing trees and to serve as the basis for an urban forest plan for East Hills. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Promote better understanding of the economic and environmental value and current status of our urban forest among East Hills residents and business and property owners, city officials, and funders
- Provide recommendations for preserving and improving the East Hills urban forest, including identifying
  - Opportunities for canopy enhancement
  - Critical urban forest issues (e.g., species diversity, disease, maintenance, preventing loss of high-value mature trees).

The tree inventory took place in August 2008. Street trees as well as trees in three public parks—Cherry Park, Congress Park School, and the People Park—were inventoried.

The inventory and urban forest plan were made possible by the support of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Urban and Community Forestry Program, and the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, State and Private Forestry Program, with matching funds provided by Grand Rapids Community Foundation.

*"The values of a community are displayed daily by the presence and quality of public trees, or by their absence."*

Greenprint: A Regional Urban Forest Initiative  
Sacramento Tree Foundation



# Executive Summary

## Key Findings of the East Hills Street Tree Inventory

Bartlett Tree Experts, assisted by more than 20 neighborhood volunteers, conducted the tree inventory. The inventory identified 1,493 trees and 594 tree spaces. Among the key findings:

### Value of East Hills Street Trees

With a cumulative value more than \$4 million, street trees in East Hills are a significant asset of the neighborhood and the city of Grand Rapids. The street trees have a total value of \$3,629,192 and park trees are valued at \$432,041. This cumulative value is a very conservative estimate because it does not include significant environmental, energy-saving and property value benefits which trees contribute annually.

### Species Diversity

- Street and park trees in East Hills represent 58 different species.
- Seven species account for 80 percent of the neighborhood's street trees; more than half of the trees (784) are maples. Percentages by tree include: Norway Maple 23%; Ash 15%; Honey Locust 10%; Silver Maple 9%; Red Maple 9%; Sugar Maple 8%; and Callery Pear-Bradford 6%.
- Ash trees (229) account for 15 percent of the street and park trees. In some areas—including the Cherry Hill sector and corridors such as Union, Eastern, Lake Drive, Wealthy and Fulton streets—ash trees represent an even greater share of the street trees.
- Although there are only 19 oak trees (1%), oaks account for five of the neighborhood's ten highest-value trees.

### Tree Age

- East Hills street trees are distributed evenly among age classes, with 33% mature trees, 34% semi-mature trees, and 31% young trees.
- One percent is over-mature and one percent is new plantings.
- The oldest tree is a 47-inch diameter northern red oak on Hollister Street, estimated to be 150 years old.

### Tree Size

- The largest-diameter public tree in East Hills is a 53" silver maple on Diamond Avenue.
- Small trees with a diameter less than 5" comprise 43% of the neighborhood's public trees; medium trees with a 5'-20" diameter represent 42%; and large trees with a diameter greater than 20" represent 14%.

# Executive Summary

## Tree Condition

- More than two-thirds (68%) of the neighborhood's street trees are in good condition (1019 trees), 22% are in fair condition (331 trees), 9% are in poor condition (133 trees), and <1% are dead (10 trees).
- 53 trees (3.5%) were identified as targets for removal, to eliminate hazards or improve sanitation.
- 186 trees (12%) require pruning for safety.
- 43 trees (3%) were identified as needing structural evaluation.
- Nearly half of the street trees in East Hills—675 trees—are in need of root collar excavation, primarily removal of mulch and dirt from the base of the trees to expose the root collar.
- The majority of ash trees in East Hills (78%, 178 trees) are in good condition, with no evidence of significant emerald ash borer (EAB) infestation.

## Tree Spaces

There are nearly 600 spaces available for street tree planting in East Hills. These spaces are distributed fairly evenly among those suitable for large, medium and small trees.

Large planting spaces: 181 (31% of available spaces)

Medium planting spaces: 209 (35% of available spaces)

Small planting spaces: 204 (34% of available spaces).

## Neighborhood Sectors

Urban forest challenges and opportunities differ significantly among the six neighborhood sectors—Fitch Corners, Congress Park, Diamond Gate, Cherry Hill, Fairmount Square, Orchard Hill/Wealthy Heights.

For example:

- Cherry Hill has the highest concentration of ash trees.
- Orchard Hill/Wealthy Heights has a significant number of narrow residential streets lacking parkways in which street trees can be planted.



# Executive Summary

## Next Steps

### Tree Preservation

- Request a 9-month moratorium on the city's ash tree removal in East Hills in order to develop a plan for identifying treatment priorities and securing funding for a treatment program.
- Identify highest priority tree preservation and maintenance issues, including pruning for safety and addressing the significant number of trees needing root collar excavation.
- Work collaboratively with the city to develop a tree management plan leveraging city, volunteer and other resources.

### Tree Planting

- Identify highest priority areas for street tree planting, based on both available tree spaces and commitment of property owners to care for newly planted trees.
- Develop a street planting plan, including planting locations within each of the six sectors of the neighborhood, appropriate tree species for each sector, and funding for the planting program.
- Identify opportunities to promote and support tree planting by private property owners.

### Education and Outreach

- Create an East Hills Tree Team to guide, coordinate and support urban forest activity in East Hills, including
  - Calculating the environmental value of East Hills street trees, based on the inventory data
  - Disseminating the East Hills Urban Forest Plan on the East Hills web site and through presentations and report distribution
  - Involving neighborhood residents, business associations and institutions in urban forest activities
  - Coordinating East Hills urban forest activities with the city departments of Forestry, Planning, and Parks and Recreation
  - Working with appropriate community organizations to create more opportunities for citizen awareness-building and education about urban forest issues
  - Working with local funders to develop increased support for neighborhood and city urban forest initiatives.

# Background

## **The East Hills Neighborhood**

The East Hills neighborhood, located a mile southeast of downtown Grand Rapids, is bounded by Union, Fulton, Fuller and Wealthy streets. East Hills comprises an area of less than one-half square mile. Originally developed in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the neighborhood includes three historic districts – Cherry Hill, Fairmount Square and the Wealthy Theatre Historic District. East Hills is composed of six neighborhood communities: Fitch Corners, Congress Park, Diamond Gate, Cherry Hill, Fairmount Square, Orchard Hill/Wealthy Heights. Public spaces within East Hills include Congress Park School, Cherry Park, and the Peoples Park.

East Hills also includes three neighborhood business districts – East Fulton, Cherry-Lake-Diamond and Wealthy Street. These districts are located on major east-west traffic corridors (Fulton, Lake Drive, Cherry and Wealthy streets) between downtown Grand Rapids and southeast suburbs and busy north-south corridors including Eastern, Diamond and Fuller avenues.

## **A History of Green Activism**

East Hills has a long history of grassroots activism encouraged and supported by the neighborhood association, the East Hills Council of Neighbors. The Council has been recognized for its effectiveness in developing public-private partnerships and its leadership in environmental issues.

The neighborhood's interest in and commitment to its urban forest is consistent with its overall involvement in environmental issues. The neighborhood association has long-standing collaborative relationships with organizations in the neighborhood, including the West Michigan Environmental Action Council (WMEAC), Clean Water Action Fund, Sustainability Research Group, and Bazzani Associates, a green development company.

Several new and rehabilitated buildings in East Hills have received LEED certification. The Wealthy Street Business Alliance is currently involved in a greening project showcasing native plants along Wealthy Street, the southern border of East Hills.

# Background

## **The Urban Canopy**

Our urban forests—the trees in our parks, yards, public spaces and streetscapes—play a vital role in the health and economic vitality of our neighborhoods. Trees affect the quality of the air and water where we live, the cost of heating and cooling our homes and businesses, property values, the success of neighborhood business districts, and ultimately, the safety and desirability of our neighborhoods.

Despite all the benefits of urban forests, shrinking municipal budgets have taken a toll on urban forests in recent years. Studies show that urban areas in the U.S. have a severe tree deficit that is costing taxpayers billions of dollars each year in air and water benefits. Over the past ten years, the deficit has increased by 21 percent. For each tree planted in U.S. cities, four urban trees are dying. Existing trees are not being maintained, leaving them more vulnerable to insect infestations and storm damage. In addition, residents are not being educated about the value of trees in the urban environment or being involved in maintaining and enhancing the urban forest.

The urban forest includes street trees as well as trees on residential and commercial property and in parks. Street trees typically comprise just 10 percent of a city's urban forest—but they play a critical role because they are a key indicator of the vitality of the urban forest and the environmental health of a city and its neighborhoods. A city's management of its street trees sets the direction—positive or negative—for the rest of the city's urban forest. The focus of the East Hills tree inventory and urban forest plan is street trees, because of the visible and vital role they play in the urban forest.

Many types of stresses impact street trees, including root space limited by small planting areas, inadequate water and nutrients, poor soils and drainage, and disease, as well as injury by vehicles, lawn mowers, weed whackers, and vandalism.

# Background

## **A Neighborhood Approach to the Urban Forest**

Like many cities, Grand Rapids has experienced significant municipal budget challenges in recent years—and its urban forestry efforts reflect severely reduced budgets and personnel. Within the city's Streets and Sanitation Department, which oversees the city's forestry activities, the staff devoted to working on trees has decreased from 22 to 8 in recent years. Even the forestry supervisor position is not solely devoted to urban forest issues, but includes snowplowing and other non-forest maintenance duties.

Recognizing the limitations of the city's urban forestry budget and personnel resources, the East Hills neighborhood has recently implemented its own urban forestry initiative. Beginning in 2006, residents in the Fairmount Square sector became concerned about the need for more street trees, the condition of existing trees, the growing threat of the emerald ash borer (EAB), and the serious challenges posed by global climate change. They banded together with the East Hills Council of Neighbors to launch Trees Please, a tree planting and public education initiative within a small sector of the neighborhood. Just two years later, East Hills has completed a comprehensive street tree inventory and developed an urban forest plan for the entire East Hills neighborhood.

Three principles guide East Hills' urban forestry work:

- Maximizing the benefits of the urban forest
  - East Hills seeks to preserve existing trees, plant new trees, and increase species diversity in order to maintain and enhance the urban forest as a community asset.
- Promoting resident education and involvement
  - Informed and involved citizens play a key role in assuring that the urban forest is recognized and supported as a critical element in a sustainable community.
- Engaging collaborative partners
  - Collaboration with the city, funders, environmental organizations and other partners is critical to maintaining the vitality of East Hills' urban forest.

# Background

## Trees Please

Trees Please, an initiative of the East Hills Council of Neighbors, works to:

- Maintain and enhance the urban forest as a valuable community asset
- Strengthen public awareness of the role of trees in a sustainable community
- Increase resident involvement in urban forest issues.

Trees Please began in 2006, with residents in the Fairmount Square sector of the neighborhood taking the lead to maintain and enhance the Fairmount Square street tree canopy. In 2006-2007 Trees Please:

- Planted 44 sizable new trees (2-1/2" caliper, balled and burlapped) equipped with gator bags and provided ongoing maintenance (watering, fertilizing, pruning and monitoring) of these trees
- Managed the pruning and deep root fertilizing of dozens of existing trees
- Educated residents about urban forest issues and caring for trees, through neighborhood newsletter articles and flyers
- Involved more than 30 residents who contributed more than 600 hours to tree planting and planning project
- Raised more than \$17,000 for tree planting and maintenance, from sources including the DTE Energy Foundation Tree Planting Program, Dyer-Ives Foundation, residents and other project supporters, and in-kind contributions.

*"Street trees are a critically important component of the green infrastructure for urban neighborhoods, providing cooling shade, reducing storm water runoff, improving water quality..., filtering air pollutants, and producing oxygen.*

*Trees also reduce stress, add character and peace to neighborhoods, and increase property values. They're the front-line buffer between the harsh, hot pavement of city streets and the spaces where we walk, play, live and work.*

*We have learned from national disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes and ice storms and from tree-killing disease such as Dutch Elm Disease that the loss of trees can have a dramatic impact on communities."*

-The State of Our Trees: The State and Health of the Street Trees of Washington, D.C., Casey Tree Endowment



# Inventory & Plan

## **The East Hills Tree Inventory and Urban Forest Plan**

Building on the success of its initial planting efforts in the Fairmount Square area, Trees Please embarked on an effort to create an urban forest plan for the entire East Hills neighborhood, based on a neighborhood-wide street tree inventory. East Hills secured a \$12,000 Community Forestry Grant supported by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Urban and Community Forestry Program, and the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, State and Private Forestry Program and a \$9,600 matching grant from Grand Rapids Community Foundation. These funds were supplemented by \$4,380 in in-kind contributions from the neighborhood association and neighborhood volunteers, including more than 200 hours of volunteer time.

## **Purpose of the East Hills Urban Forest Plan**

The purpose of the East Hills Urban Forest Plan is to preserve the existing urban forest and enhance its canopy to sustain its growth, vitality and benefits into the future. The plan aims to:

Promote better understanding of the value and current status of our urban forest among East Hills residents and business and property owners, city officials, and funders

Identify opportunities for canopy enhancement

Identify critical urban forest issues (e.g., species diversity, disease, maintenance, preventing loss of high-value mature trees)

Provide recommendations for maintaining and improving the East Hills urban forest.

## **Inventory Objectives**

The objectives of the East Hills street tree inventory include:

- Identifying critical maintenance issues of existing trees
- Identifying opportunities and priority areas for canopy enhancement
- Identifying species diversity issues
- Identifying legacy/heritage trees
- Calculating the economic value of the neighborhood's street trees (both property value and environmental value).



# Key Findings

## Key Findings of the East Hills Street Tree Inventory

Bartlett Tree Experts, assisted by more than 20 neighborhood volunteers, conducted the tree inventory. Street trees as well as trees in three public parks—Cherry Park, Congress School, and the Peoples Park—were inventoried. Each tree was tagged with a numbered blue metal disc. Each tree trunk was measured, using a Biltmore stick, to determine its diameter (DBH, i.e., diameter at breast height, 4-1/2 feet from the ground). Additional measurements included canopy radius and percentage of root infringement.

The inventory identified 1,493 trees and 594 tree spaces.

- East Hills' public trees include 1427 street trees (96%) and 64 park trees (4%).
- Seventy percent of available tree spaces are planted; 30% are empty.

### Inventory Data

The inventory provides critical data about street trees in East Hills and spaces that provide opportunities for planting additional street trees.

#### Street Tree Information

- Tag number
- Species identification (botanical name and common name)
- Location
- Tree measurements
- Diameter at breast height (DBH)
- Height
- Crown/canopy radius
- Age class
- Condition/health
  - Condition rating
  - Insects and diseases
  - Maintenance needs
  - Condition notes
- Photos of important trees/tree characteristics (e.g., legacy trees, structural hazards of specific trees)
- Tree notes

#### Tree Space Information

- Tree space size
- Overhead wires
- Site notes

# Key Findings

## Value of East Hills Street Trees

With a cumulative value of \$4,061,233.00, street trees in East Hills are a significant asset of the neighborhood and the city of Grand Rapids. The street trees have a total value of \$3,629,192 and park trees are valued at \$432,041. This cumulative value is a conservative estimate because it does not include significant environmental, energy-saving and property value benefits that trees contribute annually.

Each tree was valued based upon its size, species, condition, and location, using a modified Trunk Formula Method, a widely-used approach in the arboricultural industry. The Trunk Formula Method estimates tree values based on size and species, condition and location factors. The estimated value of each tree can generally be seen as its “replacement value” even though actual replacement would be impossible for a large tree.

The estimated cumulative value does not include significant monetary benefits resulting from energy savings, carbon sequestration, air pollution reduction, stormwater mitigation, improved water quality, and increased property values. These benefits increase in value each year a tree grows. All of these benefits are lost, however, when a tree is removed or dies.

## Highest Value Trees

| <i>Species</i>   | <i>Diameter</i> | <i>Value</i> | <i>Street</i> |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| White Oak        | 38"             | \$40,169     | Congress Park |
| Black Oak        | 44"             | 38,621       | Congress Park |
| Ash              | 44"             | 33,104       | Wealthy       |
| Sycamore         | 44"             | 33,104       | Fairmount     |
| Sugar Maple      | 35"             | 31,185       | Charles       |
| American Elm     | 48"             | 30,819       | Orchard Hill  |
| White Oak        | 32"             | 29,770       | Union         |
| White Oak        | 32"             | 29,770       | Congress Park |
| Sugar Maple      | 32"             | 26,462       | Charles       |
| Northern Red Oak | 47"             | 26,278       | Hollister     |

## Value of Ash Trees

The 229 ash trees in East Hills have a cumulative value of \$344,000.

- The highest-value ash tree is a 44" diameter tree valued at \$33,104.
- Ten ash trees have values greater than \$5,000 each.
- One-third of the ash trees (75 trees) are valued at greater than \$1,000.

# Key Findings

## Species Diversity

- Street and park trees in East Hills represent 58 different species.
- Seven species account for 80% of the neighborhood's street trees; more than half of the trees (784) are maples.

|  |               |                  |
|--|---------------|------------------|
| <b>Norway maple</b>                      | <b>23%</b>    | <b>337 trees</b> |
| <b>Ash</b>                               | <b>15%</b>    | <b>229 trees</b> |
| <b>Honey locust</b>                      | <b>10%</b>    | <b>142 trees</b> |
| <b>Silver maple</b>                      | <b>9%</b>     | <b>132 trees</b> |
| <b>Red maple</b>                         | <b>9%</b>     | <b>132 trees</b> |
| <b>Sugar maple</b>                       | <b>8%</b>     | <b>118 trees</b> |
| <b>Callery Pear-Bradford</b>             | <b>6%</b>     | <b>95 trees</b>  |
| <b>Linden</b>                            | <b>3%</b>     | <b>39 trees</b>  |
| <b>Crimson King Maple</b>                | <b>2%</b>     | <b>31 trees</b>  |
| <b>Oak (White, Black, Red, Bur, Pin)</b> | <b>1%</b>     | <b>19 trees</b>  |
| <b>Elm (American, Slippery Red)</b>      | <b>&lt;1%</b> | <b>13 trees</b>  |

- Ash trees (229) account for 15 percent of the street and park trees. In some areas—including the Cherry Hill area and corridors such as Union, Eastern, Lake Drive, Wealthy and Fulton streets—ash trees represent an even greater share of the street trees.
- East Hills' 19 oak trees (<1%) include five of the neighborhood's ten highest-value trees.

*"When it comes to 'going green,' trees are a fantastic bargain. For a very small investment they work 24/7—generating oxygen, controlling air pollution and soil erosion, recycling water, and saving energy. They're the ultimate green technology."*

-Carol Moore, East Hills Resident



# Key Findings

## Tree Age

- East Hills street trees are distributed evenly among age classes, with 33% mature trees, 34% semi-mature trees, and 31% young trees.
- One percent is over-mature and new plantings represent 1%.
- The oldest tree is a 47-inch diameter northern red oak on Hollister Street, estimated to be 150 years old.

## Tree Size

- The largest-diameter public tree in East Hills is a 53" silver maple on Diamond Avenue.
- Our neighborhood's public trees are comprised of:
  - 647 small trees, with a 5" or less diameter, represent 43%
  - 632 medium trees, 6" -20" in diameter, represent 42%
  - 214 large trees, with a 20" diameter or greater, represent 14%
- The largest diameter trees are:

| <i>Diameter (dbh)/Species</i> | <i>Street</i> |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| 53" Silver Maple              | Diamond       |
| 48" American Elm              | Orchard Hill  |
| 47" Northern Red Oak          | Hollister     |
| 44" Black Oak                 | Congress Park |
| 44" Ash                       | Wealthy       |
| 44" American Sycamore         | Fairmount     |
| 38" White Oak                 | Congress Park |
| 35" Sugar Maple               | Charles       |



# Key Findings

## Tree Condition

- More than two-thirds (68%) of the neighborhood's street trees are in good condition (1019 trees), 22% are in fair condition (331 trees), 9% are in poor condition (133 trees), and <1% are dead (10 trees).
- 53 trees (3.5%) were identified as targets for removal, to eliminate hazards or improve sanitation.
- 186 trees (12%) require pruning for safety.
- 43 trees (3%) were identified as needing structural evaluation.
- Nearly half of the street trees in East Hills—675 trees—are in need of root collar excavation, primarily removal of mulch and dirt from the base of the trees to expose the root collar.
- The majority of the 229 ash trees (78%, 178 trees) in East Hills are in good condition, with no evidence of significant emerald ash borer (EAB) infestation.

## Tree Spaces

There are nearly 600 spaces available for street tree planting in East Hills. These spaces are distributed fairly evenly among

Large planting spaces: 181 (31% of available spaces)

Medium planting spaces: 209 (35% of available spaces)

Small planting spaces: 204 (34% of available spaces).

those suitable for large, medium and small trees.

## Neighborhood Sectors

Urban forest challenges and opportunities differ significantly among the six neighborhood sectors—Fitch Corners, Congress Park, Diamond Gate, Cherry Hill, Fairmount Square, Orchard Hill/Wealthy Heights. For example:

- Cherry Hill has the highest concentration of ash trees.
- Orchard Hill/Wealthy Heights has a significant number of narrow residential streets lacking parkways in which street trees can be planted.

# Next Steps

## Next Steps

### Tree Preservation

- Request a 9-month moratorium on the city's ash tree removal in East Hills in order to develop a plan for identifying treatment priorities and securing funding for a treatment program.
- Identify highest priority tree preservation and maintenance issues, including pruning for safety and addressing the significant number of trees needing root collar excavation.
- Work collaboratively with the city to develop a tree management plan leveraging both city and volunteer resources.

### Tree Planting

- Identify highest priority areas for street tree planting, based on both available tree spaces and commitment of property owners to care for newly planted trees.
- Develop a street planting plan, including planting locations within each of the six sectors of the neighborhood, appropriate tree species for each sector, and funding for the planting program.
- Identify opportunities to promote and support tree planting by private property owners.

## Next Steps

### Education and Outreach

- Create an East Hills Tree Team to guide, coordinate and support urban forest activity in East Hills, including
  - Calculating the environmental value of East Hills street trees, based on the inventory data
  - Disseminating the East Hills urban forest plan through the East Hills web site and presentations and report distribution.
  - Involving neighborhood residents, business associations and institutions in urban forest activities
  - Coordinating East Hills urban forest activities with the city's Forestry, Planning, and Parks and Recreation departments
  - Working with appropriate community organizations to create more opportunities for citizen awareness-building and education about urban forest issues
  - Working with local funders to develop increased support for neighborhood and city urban forest initiatives.



## Acknowledgements

This report was made possible by support from the Michigan DNR Urban and Community Forestry Program, and the USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forestry Program, with matching funds provided by Grand Rapids Community Foundation.

Arborist Brian Hiemstra, of Bartlett Tree Experts, has provided invaluable guidance through innumerable hours of pro bono service to East Hills over the past three years. His colleagues from Bartlett's Inventory Services division, Michael Sherwood and Patrick Anderson, designed and carried out the inventory project and developed the report on the inventory findings. Throughout the project, Brian, Michael and Patrick were remarkable in their responsiveness to the neighborhood's goals, their patience and flexibility in working with volunteers, and their diligence in meeting tight project deadlines.

Our thanks to the enthusiastic and committed volunteers who assisted with the East Hills tree inventory: Leah Baker, Dotti Clune, Elaine Dalcher, Cynthia Davidek, Gretchen Deems, Ryan Genzink, Steve Goebel, Laura Hartness, Jacob Hartness, Jill Henemyer, Steve Holladay, Jeannie Hosey, Jon Kornoelje, Carol Moore, Victoria Morgenthaler, Diana Pace, Gail Peterson, Omar Renor, Mark Rumsey, Janet Thering, Tony Travis, Linda Troyer, Nikki Wall, John Wittkowski, Michele Wittkowski, Joe Wist.

The East Hills Council of Neighbors staff, including neighborhood organizer KC Caliendo, technology problem-solver Michele Wittkowski, and intern Johanna Jelks, provided exemplary staff support for this volunteer-led project.

We appreciate the work of West Michigan Environmental Action Council, led by Executive Director Rachel Hood, in support of urban forest efforts. WMEAC's contributions range from hosting webcasts and East Hills tree inventory meetings to leading the Save Your Ash! campaign.

East Hills has benefited greatly from the work of a variety of organizations focusing on trees and urban forest issues, including:

- Alliance for Community Trees, [www.actrees.org](http://www.actrees.org)
- American Forests, [www.americanforests.org](http://www.americanforests.org)
- Arbor Day Foundation, [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org).
- Casey Trees, [www.caseytrees.org](http://www.caseytrees.org)
- Home Depot Foundation, [www.homedepotfoundation.org](http://www.homedepotfoundation.org)
- Sacramento Tree Foundation, [www.sactree.com](http://www.sactree.com)
- Savannah Tree Foundation, [www.savannahreefoundation.com](http://www.savannahreefoundation.com)
- Urban Natural Resources Institute (UNRI), [www.unri.org](http://www.unri.org)

**Report References:**

Sacramento Tree Foundation, [www.sactree.com](http://www.sactree.com)

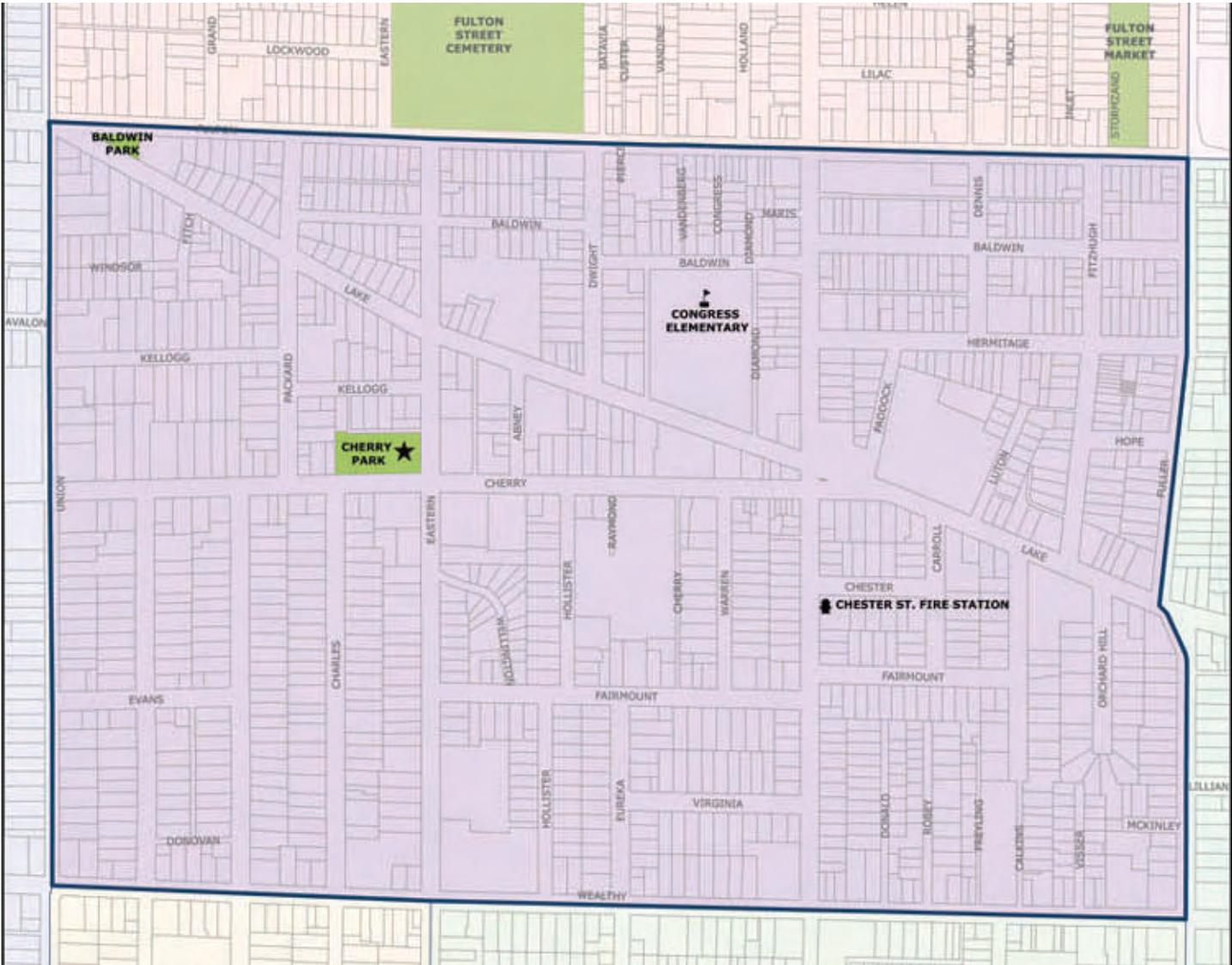
Casey Trees, [www.caseytrees.org](http://www.caseytrees.org)

Livable Communities and Urban Forests, Local Government Commission, [www.lgc.org](http://www.lgc.org)

New Study Reveals Dramatic National Tree Loss, news release, September 17, 2003, American Forests, [www.americanforests.org/news/print.php?id+120](http://www.americanforests.org/news/print.php?id+120)

Setting Urban Tree Canopy Goals, American Forests, [www.americanforests.org/resources/urbanforests/treedeficit.php](http://www.americanforests.org/resources/urbanforests/treedeficit.php)

Mark Duntemann, Natural Path Urban Forestry Consultants, Introduction to Urban and Community Forestry Management Planning, a webcast/workshop series sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program and the National Arbor Day Foundation.





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