



2020–2024

# **Community Forestry Management Plan**

**Town of Secaucus**

Hudson County, NJ

## **2020 – 2024 COMMUNITY FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **Town of Secaucus Hudson County New Jersey**

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## Municipal Information

### Municipal / County Information Form

MUNICIPALITY	Town of Secaucus																																																												
COUNTY	Hudson																																																												
ADDRESS	1203 Paterson Plank Road Secaucus, NJ 07094																																																												
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ORGANIZATION	Environmental Department																																																												
MAYOR'S SIGNATURE	Original Copy Signed																																																												
DATE SUBMITTED	November 2020																																																												
TIME PERIOD	January 2020 – December 2024																																																												
CSIP PRACTICES IDENTIFIED IN PLAN	<table><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #1</td><td>Training .....</td><td>p. 20, 28, 34</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #2</td><td>Community Forestry Ordinance Establishment .....</td><td>p. 16, 17</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #3</td><td>Public Education + Awareness .....</td><td>p. 23</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #4</td><td>Arbor Day .....</td><td>p. 23, 24</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #5</td><td>Tree Inventory .....</td><td>p. 5, 7, 26</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #6</td><td>Hazard Tree Assessment .....</td><td>p. 28</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #7</td><td>Storm Damage Assessment .....</td><td>p. 33, 37, 38</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #8</td><td>Tree Maintenance + Removals .....</td><td>p. 32</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #9</td><td>Insect and Disease Management .....</td><td>p. 30, 31, 33, 37</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #10</td><td>Wildfire Protection .....</td><td>p. 37</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #11</td><td>Tree Planting .....</td><td>p. 29</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #12</td><td>Tree Recycling .....</td><td>p. 35</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #13</td><td>Sidewalk Maintenance Program .....</td><td>p. 21, 30, 33</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #14</td><td>Stormwater Management .....</td><td>p. 8</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td>CSIP #15</td><td>Other .....</td><td>various sections</td></tr></table>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #1	Training .....	p. 20, 28, 34	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #2	Community Forestry Ordinance Establishment .....	p. 16, 17	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #3	Public Education + Awareness .....	p. 23	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #4	Arbor Day .....	p. 23, 24	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #5	Tree Inventory .....	p. 5, 7, 26	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #6	Hazard Tree Assessment .....	p. 28	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #7	Storm Damage Assessment .....	p. 33, 37, 38	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #8	Tree Maintenance + Removals .....	p. 32	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #9	Insect and Disease Management .....	p. 30, 31, 33, 37	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #10	Wildfire Protection .....	p. 37	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #11	Tree Planting .....	p. 29	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #12	Tree Recycling .....	p. 35	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #13	Sidewalk Maintenance Program .....	p. 21, 30, 33	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #14	Stormwater Management .....	p. 8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSIP #15	Other .....	various sections
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*\* I Certify that this Community Forestry Management Plan was developed specifically and exclusively for the Town of Secaucus.*

#### Official Use Only Certification

The above-named municipality has made formal application to the New Jersey Forest Service. I am pleased to advise you that after our review, the NJ Forest 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:

Original Copy Signed + Dated

State Forester

Approved Date

**SCOPE**

The following Community Forestry Management Plan outlines the programs and procedures through which public tree resources in the Town of Secaucus will continue to be managed through December 31, 2024.

Secaucus has developed and implemented this Community Forestry Management Plan in accordance with statewide efforts to preserve and promote sustainable community forest resources, and in support of the goals and objectives of its municipal master plan.

Objectives contained in this fourth consecutive five-year plan build upon the successes realized in implementing the Town's previous five-year plans and are primarily focused on public trees along and on municipal streets and properties.

It is further expected that various elements of this plan will continue to stimulate the public's appreciation for trees and the voluntary planting, protection, and care of trees on private property for the benefit of the entire community.

**MISSION  
STATEMENT**

To ensure the quality of life in the Town of Secaucus by providing for the care and management of community tree resources through sustainable tree planting, tree maintenance, hazard tree removal, and public outreach.

**OVERALL  
PROGRAM  
GOALS**

The New Jersey Community Forestry Council has identified fifteen Community Stewardship Incentive Program (CSIP) practices that comprise a complete and comprehensive community forestry program.

Within each of the plan elements that follow, existing programs, policies and procedures are described, intermediate and element-specific goals are established, and CSIP-based objectives for the 2020 – 2024 management period are set.

Systematic fulfillment of these CSIP-specific goals and objectives will continue to advance Secaucus's Shade Tree Program toward its overall program goals, which are established as follows:

1. Maximize the benefits that trees provide the Town of Secaucus and its residents.
2. Maximize long-term stability and sustainability in the community forest.
3. Optimize the balance between tree condition, maintenance costs and budgetary constraints.
4. Minimize the risk of trees to public safety.
5. Minimize conflicts between trees, sidewalks, and other infrastructure.
6. Stimulate public interest, appreciation, and support for public shade tree programs.
7. Encourage the planting, preservation, and proper care of trees on private lands.
8. Increase the Secaucus's overall tree canopy cover to 20%.
9. Meet all eligibility requirements of the NJ Shade Tree + Community Forestry Assistance Act.

**TREE HAZARDS  
+ LIABILITY**

The Town of Secaucus recognizes the physical, environmental, economic, and social benefits that a well-established and properly maintained tree resource provides to the community.

It also recognizes, however, that the benefits of trees also carry costs and potential liabilities.

As with all municipal assets, trees require maintenance, and it is inevitable that potentially hazardous conditions will emerge. Nevertheless, it is clear that a comprehensive and proactive shade tree management program designed to prevent, anticipate, and correct such problems will maximize the benefits of trees while minimizing the threat to public safety and exposure to liability. Objectives contained within this Community Forestry Management Plan have been formulated to achieve and maintain the necessary balance.

The Town of Secaucus acknowledges that not all hazardous conditions can or will be predicted. It must work within a limited budget and may not be able to meet every need immediately. The intent of this Plan is to direct available resources toward the greatest needs and systematically develop and maintain a healthy shade tree resource with a commensurate reduction in the threat to public safety.

Public safety has been and remains a key consideration in all shade tree plans and programs. This Plan provides a systematic means of identifying and abating existing tree hazards on a prioritized basis. Further, it provides a means of reducing the potential for future hazards and liability through responsible planting and preventive maintenance.

2014 – 2020  
SHADE TREE  
PROGRAM  
REVIEW

The Town of Secaucus accomplished several of the objectives set forth in its 2014 – 2018 Community Forestry Management Plan, the goals and objectives of which were carried through 2020. Several others remain incomplete due to insufficient manpower and resources, or because they were subsequently deemed unnecessary. Where appropriate, incomplete objectives have been carried forward to this 2020 – 2024 Community Forestry Management Plan.

The following is a summary of the Shade Tree Program’s key accomplishments as they relate to objectives outlined in the Town’s 2014 – 2018 Community Forestry Management Plan.

1. The Town continued its existing training programs, met its New Jersey Shade Tree + Community Forestry Assistance Act requirements for continuing education each year, and maintained continuous accreditation under the Act.
2. Secaucus continued to implement its wide-ranging public education, awareness and outreach efforts relating to trees and environmental stewardship in general.
3. Comprehensive and far-reaching Arbor Day celebrations continued to be held each year with the Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation (commonly referred to as the Tree Committee) coordinating the Town’s elementary, middle, and high schools, the Mayor and Council, other committees and departments, and corporate sponsors. Celebrations have typically included poster contests, various environmental stewardship projects, tree plantings, tree seedling give-a-ways, readings and musical performances by students, donation of books to the school and public libraries, and presentation of the Town’s Tree City USA awards. Local print and television media always provide detailed coverage.
4. Secaucus continued to apply for, receive and advertise its designation as a Tree City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation, a distinction it has held since 1993.
5. Funded by a Sustainable New Jersey grant and implemented by in-house staff, the Town completed an inventory of street trees in residential neighborhoods. Data was entered into an *i-Tree Streets* database and all available reports were generated to characterize the tree population and the variety of valuable benefits it provides.

The results have proven valuable in identifying species that have performed poorly and in selecting species for new plantings that will gradually diversify the tree population and reduce its vulnerability to species-specific threats.

A related objective for development of tree canopy cover goals has not yet been completed and has been carried forward to this 2020 – 2024 Community Forestry Management Plan.

6. Secaucus’s Shade Tree Program continually strived to promptly identify and effectively addressed trees requiring priority maintenance to help minimize potential tree hazard risks.
7. The Town’s list of Approved Species, a resource utilized by both the Town and residents, was revised and updated based on the inventory results by removing species that were found to be performing poorly and adding a wider array of desirable species. Focus has been directed toward species known to be tolerant of urban conditions, deicing salt, and flood conditions.



In addition, the Approved Species list provides guidance on the types of planting locations each species is suited for, such as under electric wires, confined curbside areas, etc.

8. Many property owners in Secaucus and throughout northern New Jersey have developed negativity to new street tree plantings due to past experiences with storm damage and power outages, sidewalk conflicts, and sewer intrusion. As part of its efforts to counter this resistance and ensure that the benefits trees provide are perpetuated, Secaucus launched a Tree Acceptance Incentive Program in which it promotes the planting of “sidewalk-friendly” species in connection with its existing Sidewalk Safety Program and allows the property owner to select the type of trees from its Approved Species list.
9. Furthering its efforts to expand tree canopy cover across Secaucus, the Town’s Tree Appreciation Campaign posted a video about the benefits of trees on the Environmental Department webpage in 2015 and raised approximately \$9,000 to plant 45 trees from corporate partners, local businesses, and residents. This call to action has been repeated every two years and is currently underway again with a goal of reaching \$10,000 in donations.
10. In 2016, the Town received a \$30,000 Community Stewardship Incentive Program Grant from the NJ Community Forestry Program. With this funding, Secaucus successfully planted a new landscape of 187 canopy and understory trees along the Secaucus Greenway, adjacent to the high school and Hackensack River.
11. The Town continually reviewed its Community Forestry Management Plan, monitored progress toward its goals and objectives and integration with its other environmental initiatives, made the necessary adjustments in the Shade Tree Program’s activities to address current needs, and submitted all necessary Annual Accomplishment Reports to the NJ Forest Service in accordance with the requirements of the New Jersey Shade Tree + Community Forestry Assistance Act. The Town of Secaucus has prepared this third five-year Community Forestry Management Plan for the 2020 – 2024 management period with the assistance of a NJ Green Communities Challenge Grant and based on a thorough review of its goals, objectives and current needs.

**2000 – 2018  
COMMUNITY  
FORESTRY  
MANAGEMENT  
PLAN BENEFITS**

Since it first implemented a Community Forestry Management Plan in 2000, Secaucus has realized numerous benefits, which include the following:

1. Through this plan, the Town of Secaucus and the various Shade Tree Program participants maintain a clear and consistent set of goals and operating procedures that survive over the long-term as individual employees and volunteers leave the program and new ones join.
2. With accreditation under the NJ Shade Tree + Community Forestry Assistance Act, the Town has benefited from grants that it would not otherwise have been eligible for, allowing it to make significant forward strides.
3. Training and professional development completed in accordance with the New Jersey Shade Tree + Community Forestry Assistance Act requirements has increased the number of individuals that have improved their level of knowledge in the day-to-day practices of urban forest management.

**CURRENT  
PUBLIC TREE  
ASSESSMENT**

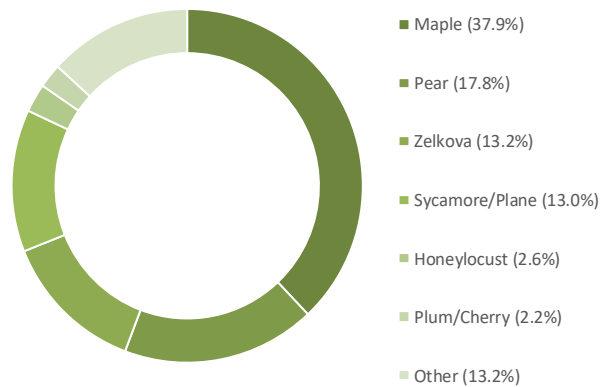
From 2011 through 2014, Town employees and volunteers conducted a new partial inventory of Secaucus’s street tree population. Data was collected into an *i-Tree Streets* database and a variety of summary reports characterizing the current street tree population and the benefits it provides to the community were generated.

No current or past tree inventory data exists for the Town’s 22 parks beyond a 2001 inventory of Schmidt’s Woods.

Based on the current inventory data, the following is currently known about Secaucus’s public street tree population:

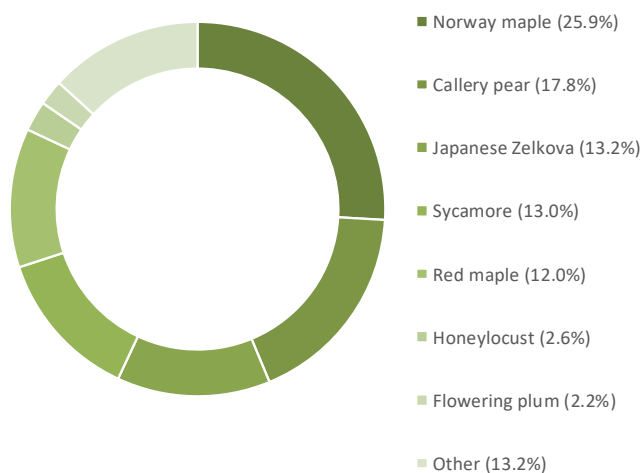
1. The street tree population currently contains approximately 1,500 trees.
2. Streets in most areas of the Town have fair to poor stocking, though the level of stocking varies significantly between localized areas. In most areas, even where there are a significant number of trees, canopy cover remains low because a majority of the trees are young or of relatively small species.
3. As in most municipalities in New Jersey, many street-side sites in Secaucus offer a limited amount of growing space and have numerous conflicts in the form of overhead and below-ground utilities, signs, fire hydrants, and pavement.
4. The most frequent genera in the street tree population are *Acer* (maple) at 37.9%, *Pyrus* (pear) at 17.8%, *Zelkova* (Zelkova) at 13.2%, and *Platanus* (sycamores and planes) at 13.0%.
5. *Acer* (maples) and *Pyrus* (pear) together comprise over 50% of the street tree population. This leaves the street tree population vulnerable to extensive losses from insect and disease issues that are specific to those genera.

*Street Tree Genus Composition*



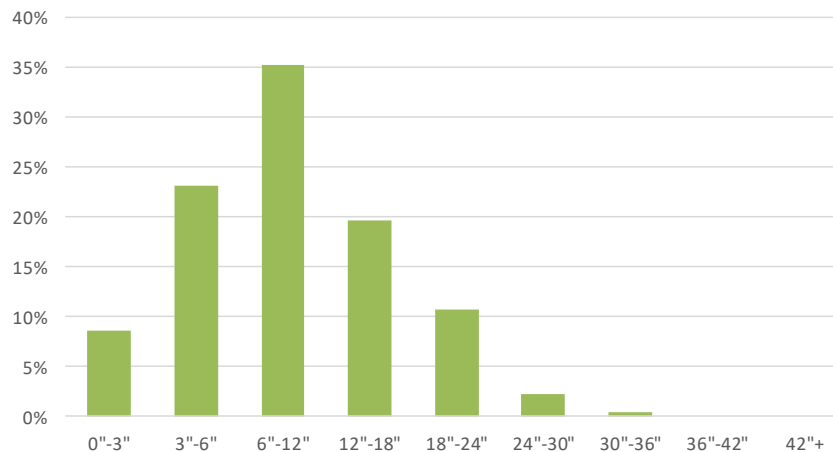
6. Existing street trees currently represent a small number of species, though planting since the inventory was conducted has focused on increasing diversity. The most frequent species in the street tree population are *Acer platanoides* (Norway maple) at 25.9%, *Pyrus calleryana* (Callery pear) at 17.8%, *Zelkova serrata* (Japanese Zelkova) at 13.2%, *Platanus occidentalis* (American sycamore) at 13.0%, and *Acer rubrum* (red maple) at 12.0%.

*Street Tree Species Composition*



7. *Acer platanoides* (Norway maple), *Pyrus calleryana* (Callery pear), *Zelkova serrata* (Japanese Zelkova), *Platanus occidentalis* (American sycamore), and *Acer rubrum* (red maple) currently comprise a larger percentage of the street tree population than is currently recommended to protect it against extensive losses to species-specific insects and diseases.
8. The age structure of the street tree population is irregular uneven aged, meaning that there are significant numbers of trees in at least three age classes, but they are not evenly distributed from young to old.
  - a) 67% of the street trees are less than 12-inches in diameter and, in most cases, quite young.
  - b) 30% of the street trees are 12-inches to 24-inches in diameter and in the young-mature to mature age classes.
  - c) Just 3% of the trees are 24-inches in diameter and larger and in the mature to over-mature age classes.

*Street Tree Diameter Distribution*



## TREE CANOPY COVER

The Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium's (MLDC) 2011 National Landcover Database (NLDC 2011), obtained via the NJ Forest Adapt website in February 2019, indicates that Secaucus's public and private urban forest canopy cover averages 9% of its total land area.

While this data is derived from a national study and is therefore imprecise for areas as small as an individual municipality, it does provide a reasonable and useful estimate of the Town's average canopy cover.

Similar information previously published by the USDA Forest Service using 2001 Landsat satellite imagery and 1990 and 2000 census and geographic data (USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station, General Technical Report NRS-47, 2009), indicated that Secaucus's public and private urban forest cover averaged 14.5% in 2001.

It is not clear to what extent the change from 14.5% in 2001 to 9% in 2011 is the result of inaccuracies in the earlier estimate and the use of improved technologies in the most recent estimate, versus a true reduction in actual canopy cover. Certainly, ongoing, programmatic removal of over-mature trees on both public and private land and replacement with smaller, immature trees and losses of mature trees during Superstorm Sandy and others over the past ten years likely has contributed to the reduced canopy cover estimate.

**RELATION TO  
THE TOWN  
MASTER PLAN**

All aspects of this Community Forestry Management Plan remain consistent and compatible with the goals, objectives, and general intent of Secaucus's 2009 Municipal Master Plan.

In general, comprehensive shade tree management efforts will help enhance the aesthetic appeal of residential and commercial streetscapes, improve air quality, contribute to combatting climate change, and help safeguard the well-being of Secaucus residents. Further, these efforts will ensure that a beneficial shade tree resource is perpetuated so that the physical, economic, and social benefits they provide to the community will continue, uninterrupted, over the long term.

While the current Master Plan does not make specific reference to the Town's Shade Tree Program, it is widely recognized that the Program is critical to maintaining quality of life in Secaucus and it is an integral part of the municipal structure. As such, the Environmental Department and the Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation (commonly referred to as the Tree Committee) will continue to petition for inclusion in the reexamination process and have the Shade Tree Program's goals incorporated into the Master Plan.

Secaucus also falls under the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission (HMDC) Master Plan. In addition to participating in development of the municipal Master Plan, the Environmental Department will seek representation on the HMDC to promote the work that Secaucus is doing to ensure sustainability at home and beyond.

**RELATION TO  
SECAUCUS'S  
STORMWATER  
PLAN**

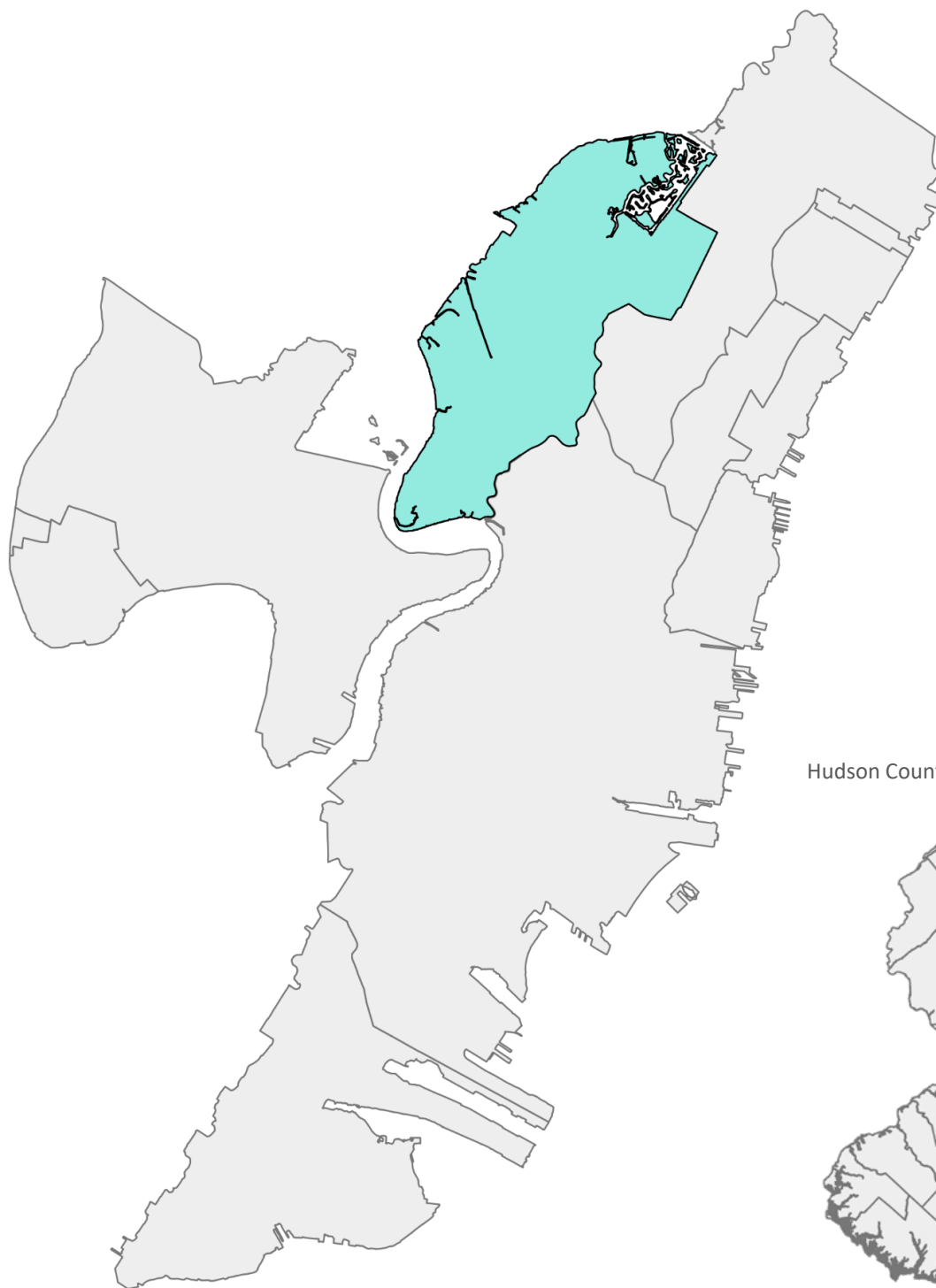
The Town of Secaucus currently lacks a specific and separate stormwater management plan. Rather, stormwater requirements are addressed via Chapter 116A of the Town Code, *Stormwater Control*, and various other chapters covering land planning, zoning, and property maintenance.

All aspects of this Community Forestry Management Plan are consistent with and in direct support of the purpose and requirements of Chapter 116A and related regulations. Additionally, Shade Tree Program efforts outlined in this Community Forestry Management plan contribute significantly to extending stormwater control measures beyond the requirements of Chapter 116A in established developments throughout the Town.

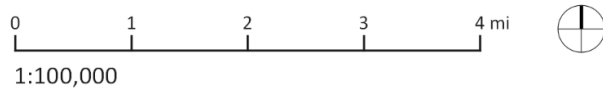
Trees and other vegetative cover are known to help reduce soil erosion and siltation, sequester pollutants, and improve soil permeability, thereby reducing the runoff of pollutant laden stormwater into natural water bodies. Increased levels of tree canopy and vegetative cover are directly correlated to improved water quality and reduced risk of flooding.

The concentration of leaves in stormwater is known to contribute to reduced system function and an increase in potentially harmful nutrients in water bodies. To combat this, Secaucus has met requirements for installing Eco-Inlets on storm drains along municipal streets. Further, residents are required to bag leaves placed at the curb for pick-up within mandated timeframes to minimize their entry into stormwater drainage systems, streams, and rivers.

The Town of Secaucus encourages private property owners to preserve, plant and maintain trees, shrubs and other vegetation on their property to further reduce impervious groundcover, ensure efficient, natural drainage, reduce the risk and severity of flooding, and minimize the runoff of silt, nutrients, and pollutant laden stormwater into local and regional water networks. The planting of low-maintenance landscapes that minimize pesticide usage is strongly recommended.



Hudson County within New Jersey



## Town of Secaucus within Hudson County

*Counties and municipalities maps generated from the NJ Office of Information Technology (NJGIT), Office of Geographic Information Systems (OGIS) "Municipalities of New Jersey (Clipped to Coast) Edition 20121228" data (2012).*



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## Roads + Railways Map

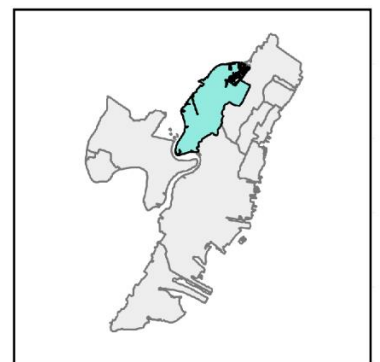
Roads data from US Census Bureau "TIGER/Line Shapefile, 2014, state, New Jersey, Primary and Secondary Roads State-based Shapefile"; rails from NJOIT, OGIS "NJ Transit, PATH and PATCO Passenger Rail Lines, 2011 (NAD83, NJSP feet)".



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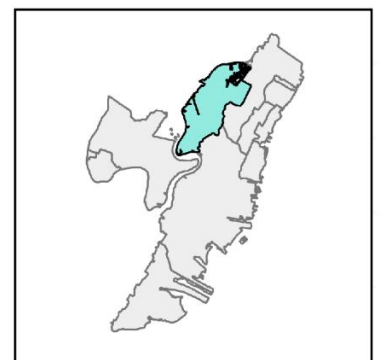
## Aerial Imagery Map

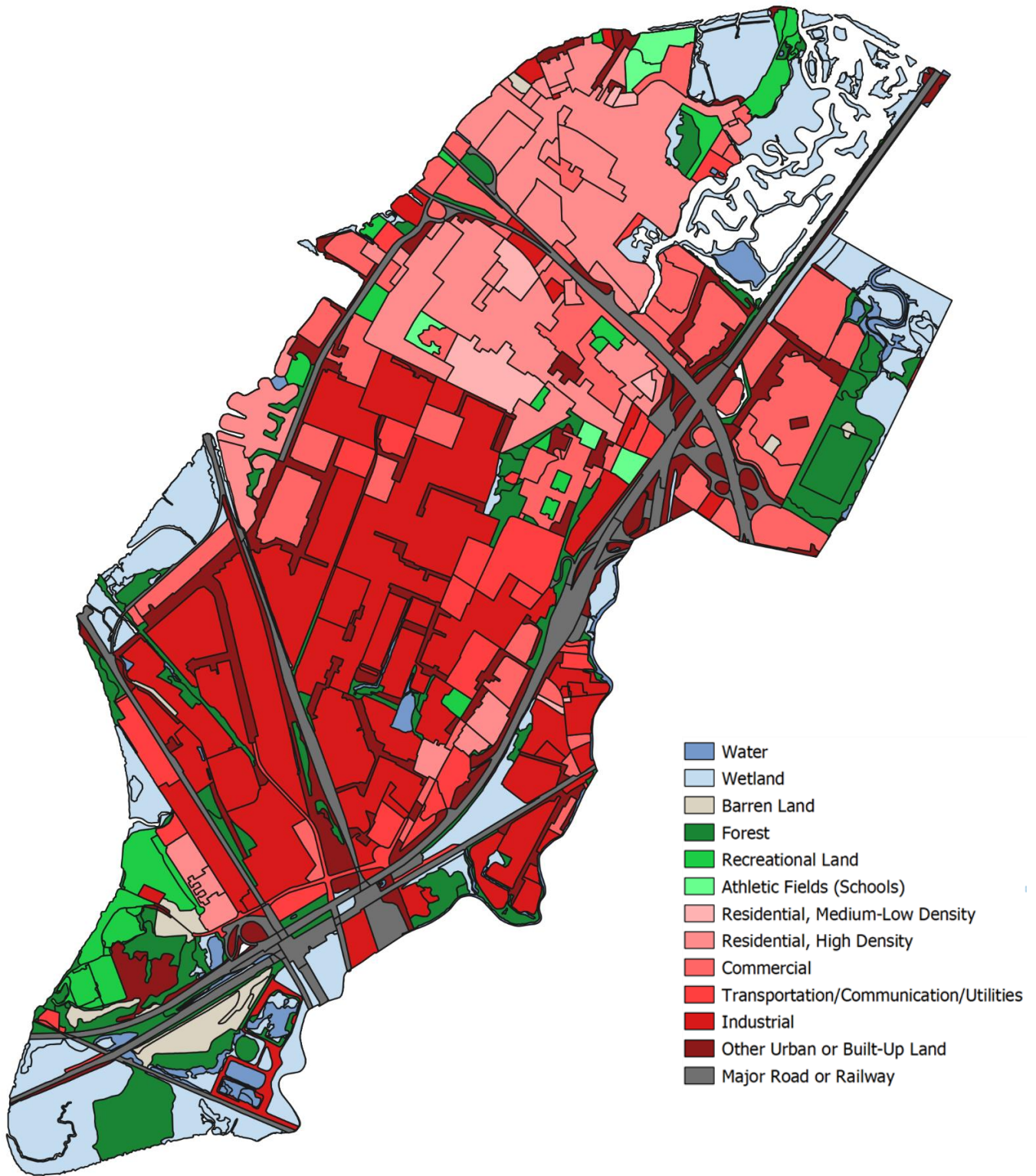
*Aerial imagery courtesy of the USDA National Agricultural Imagery Program (2015).*



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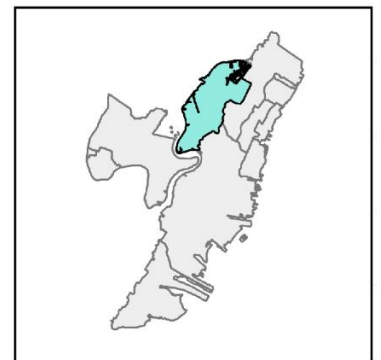
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## Land Use / Land Cover Map

Land use/land cover map generated from the NJOIT, OGIS "Land Use/Land Cover 2012 Update" data.

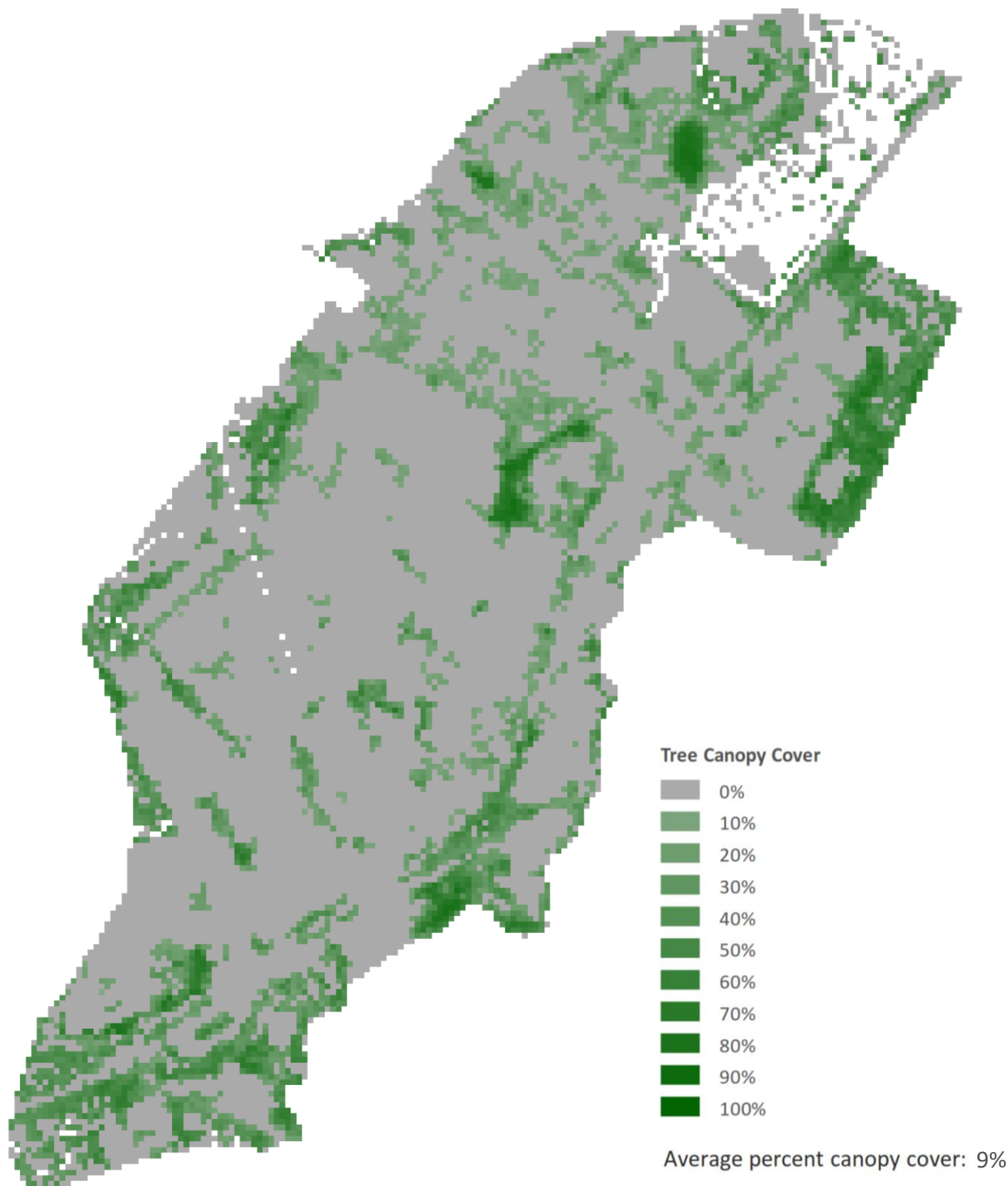


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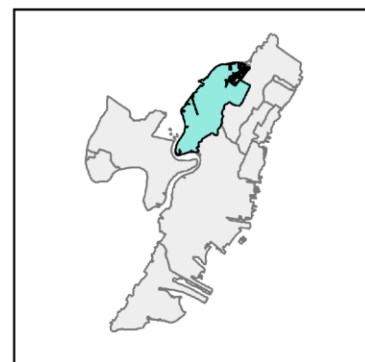
## Percent Canopy Cover Map

*Percent canopy cover map generated from the National Land Cover Database (NLCD) Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics (MRLC) Consortium data (2011).*



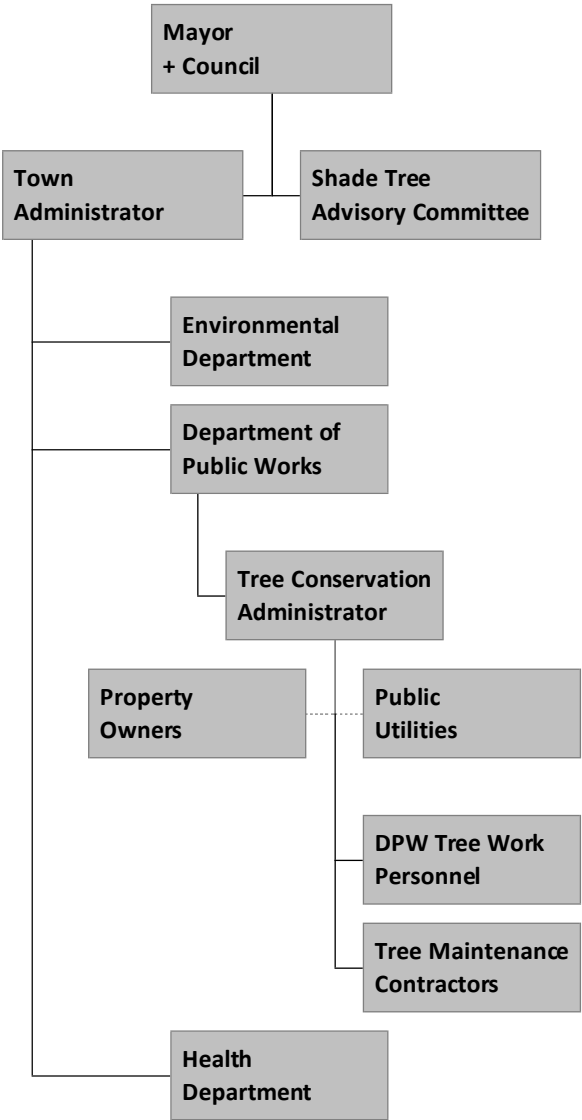
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SHADE TREE  
PROGRAM  
STRUCTURE

With oversight by the Mayor and Council, the Department of Public Works, the Environmental Department, and the Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation (commonly referred to as the Tree Committee) cooperate to administer and implement Secaucus’s Shade Tree Program. The Department of Health and County and State agencies also provide significant support.



SHADE TREE  
PROGRAM  
RESPONSIBILITIES

- Mayor + Council**
  - The Mayor and Council are responsible for appointing department heads and members to the Town’s various boards and committees.
  - The Mayor and Council have ultimate authority over the policies, procedures, and programs of Secaucus’s Shade Tree Program and are responsible for approving its budget.

**2. *Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation***

- a) The Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation (commonly referred to as the “Tree Committee”) is a group of six resident volunteers that advises the Mayor and Council and the Administrator of Tree Conservation on matters relating to Secaucus’s public tree resource.
- b) Specific responsibilities of the Tree Committee over the past several years has included:
  - i) Public outreach.
  - ii) Planning and implementation of Arbor Day celebrations.
  - iii) Guidance in the selection of appropriate species for tree planting projects.
  - iv) Obtaining grant funding, donations, and trees for planting from businesses and organizations such as the Meadowlands Development Commission and Sustainable New Jersey.

**3. *Town Administrator***

- a) The Town Administrator serves as the chief administrative official of the Town.
- b) The Town Administrator ensures that the Town follows all applicable laws, policies, and procedures in the procurement of personnel, resources, and contractors.

**4. *Environmental Department***

- a) The Environmental Department assists in coordinating the efforts of the Shade Tree Program and other environmental initiatives in Secaucus.
- b) The Environmental Director holds a seat on the Tree Committee.

**5. *Department of Public Works***

- a) The Department of Public Works completes maintenance on public trees less than 15-feet in height and assists in planting new trees donated by local businesses and organizations.
- b) The Department of Public Works provides emergency response service to clear fallen trees and/or branches from roadways, when necessary.

**6. *Administrator of Tree Conservation***

- a) The Administrator of Tree Conservation is appointed by and reports to the Mayor and Council.
- b) The Administrator of Tree Conservation, in consultation with the Tree Committee, is responsible for enforcing and administering Chapter 109 of the Town Code, *Tree Conservation*. Specifically, the Administrator of Tree Conservation is empowered to:
  - i) Exercise full and exclusive control over the regulation, planting, and care of trees, shrubbery, and other plants, and the ground surrounding them, within municipal rights-of-way and on Town properties.
  - ii) Require the removal or maintenance of any tree posing risk to public safety and require the replacement of any tree removed with an appropriate species.
  - iii) Administer treatment to, or remove, any tree on private property, with consent, that is confirmed to harbor insects or disease that poses risk to neighboring public trees.
  - iv) Provide for the maintenance and replanting of the Town’s public tree resources.

**7. *Tree Maintenance + Planting Contractors***

- a) Private contractors are routinely hired to complete approximately 50% of all public tree maintenance, planting, and removal work in Secaucus.
- b) Contractors are, within the terms of their agreement, responsible for:
  - i) Completing all work to the specifications of the Administrator of Tree Conservation in an efficient and safe manner.

- ii) Following all current and accepted arboricultural standards and practices and abiding by all current and applicable safety standards relating to tree care operations.
- iii) Reporting any tree-related hazards or other problems immediately to the Town.

#### 8. **Health Department**

- a) The Health Department is currently responsible for handling the receipt and processing of permit application for the removal of public trees.

#### 9. **Property Owners**

- a) Private property owners assist Secaucus's Shade Tree Program to the extent that they:
  - i) Notify the Town of problems and service requests for public trees (*see Tree Service Request Procedures below*).
  - ii) Are asked to irrigate new trees planted adjacent to their properties.
  - iii) Are encouraged to protect, plant, and properly care for trees on private property.

#### 10. **Public Utilities**

- a) Public utilities are responsible for minimizing conflicts between trees and their facilities.
- b) Specifically, public utilities and their contractors are responsible for:
  - i) Abiding by all applicable ordinances.
  - ii) Keeping the Town informed of their work plans and schedules.
  - iii) Exercising reasonable diligence in the installation and maintenance of their facilities so as to avoid damage to public and private trees.
  - iv) Not removing any tree without prior approval of the Town or its owner.
  - v) Following all current and accepted arboricultural standards and practices.
  - vi) Assisting Town personnel and contractors in completing tree removal and maintenance work around their facilities, where necessary.

### CURRENT ORDINANCES + RESOLUTIONS

The following govern, authorize, or relate to Secaucus's Shade Tree Program:

1. Chapter 109 of the Town Code, *Tree Conservation*, which establishes and empowers the Administrator of Tree Conservation and the Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation (commonly referred to as the Tree Committee), and provides for the planting, care, and protection of publicly controlled trees in the Town of Secaucus (*see page 45*).
2. Chapter 104 of the Town Code, *Property Maintenance*, which assigns responsibility for the maintenance of public sidewalks to the adjacent property owner and contains requirements for the maintenance of vegetation on private lands.
3. Ordinance 2018-36, which amends Chapter 104, *Property Maintenance*, to specify responsibilities pertaining to sidewalk and driveway areas.
4. Chapter 135, *Zoning*, which contains requirements for the planting of trees, landscaping, and vegetative buffers in conjunction with site development.

### TREE SERVICE REQUEST PROCEDURES

Requests for the pruning, removal, planting, or other treatment of public trees are most frequently initiated by adjoining property owners, but may also be generated internally by Town personnel and other sources, and are processed in the following manner:

1. Service requests and complaints relating to public trees are received by or forwarded to the Administrator of Tree Conservation.
2. The Administrator of Tree Conservation inspects the tree(s) in question to determine the validity

**2020 – 2024  
OBJECTIVES**

- of the complaint or request, the nature of the work necessary, and the urgency with which corrective work must be completed.
  - 3. The requester is informed of the inspection findings, the action to be taken and the anticipated response time in person or via telephone, letter, or door hanger.
  - 4. Any pruning, removal, or other work necessary is prioritized and scheduled for completion by the Department of Public Works or a private contractor hired by the Town, as appropriate.
  - 5. Records of inspections and completed work are maintained by the Administrator of Tree Conservation.
- 
- 1. ***Ongoing Administrative Programs***
    - a) *2020 – 2024*
      - i) Continue implementing all administrative programs, policies, and procedures already in effect.
  - 2. ***Tree Conservation Ordinance Review***
    - a) *July – December 2022*
      - i) Review Chapter 109 of the Town Code, *Tree Conservation*, and evaluate how well it addresses current needs and issues of the Shade Tree Program and whether maximum fines should be increased to those permitted by New Jersey State statute.
      - ii) Review current enforcement policies and practices and determine how to improve the success and consistency of enforcement actions taken.
    - b) *January – June 2023*
      - i) Draft revisions to the ordinance with the ongoing review and input of the Mayor and Council, the Town Administrator, all related departments and committees, Town Counsel, and experienced individuals from other municipalities during the revision process.
    - c) *July – September 2023*
      - i) Submit the revised ordinance for approval by the Mayor and Council.

<b>OVERVIEW</b>	<p>The following is a summary of the resources available to Secaucus’s Shade Tree Program on a per-year average over the past five years.</p> <p>Objectives contained within this Plan may require resources beyond those currently available. The Secaucus’s ability to fully satisfy these objectives may be dependent upon its ability to secure additional funding through external sources and grant programs.</p>
<b>2014 – 2020 GRANTS RECEIVED</b>	<p>The Town of Secaucus received the following grants to supplement its existing resources for shade tree planting and care:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. A 2016 Community Stewardship Incentive Program Grant from the NJ Forest Service in the amount of \$30,000.00, which was used to plant a new landscape of 187 canopy and understory trees along the Secaucus Greenway, adjacent to the high school</li><li>2. A 2019 Green Communities Challenge Grant from the NJ Forest Service in the amount of \$3,000.00, which was used to help fund preparation of this Community Forestry Management Plan.</li></ol>
<b>EMPLOYEE SALARY + WAGES</b>	<p>Town Administrator Administrator of Tree Conservation Environmental Director Department of Public Works personnel</p> <p><i>Subtotal (total salary and benefits prorated by percent of time dedicated to the Shade Tree Program)</i></p> <p><i>\$180,000.00</i></p>
<b>OPERATIONS</b>	<p>Contracted tree pruning, removal, and stump grinding Sidewalk safety Training + professional development Memberships + subscriptions Other miscellaneous operating expenses</p> <p><i>Subtotal</i></p> <p><i>\$65,900.00</i></p>
<b>TOWN EQUIPMENT</b>	<p>(1) Chip truck (1) Chipper (1) CAT loader (1) Stump grinder Augur attachment and bits (2) 350-gallon pickup mounted water tanks Various chainsaws, handsaws, and other related tools</p> <p><i>Subtotal (estimated annual value based on value amortized over 5 – 15-year service life,</i></p>

	<i>plus annual maintenance, etc. and prorated by percent of time used by the Shade Tree Program)</i>	\$49,000.00
<b>TREE PLANTING</b>	Cost of trees and ancillary materials purchased and planted by Town Contracted tree planting  <i>Subtotal</i>	   \$50,300.00
<b>TREE WASTE RECYCLING</b>	Tree waste disposal fees Other related costs  <i>Subtotal</i>	   \$10,900.00
<b>VOLUNTEER SERVICES</b>	Tree Committee members Other volunteer community groups and individuals  <i>Subtotal (800 hrs. per year average @ \$27.46)</i>	   \$21,968.00
<hr/>		
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b><i>Town Resources</i></b>	<b><i>\$356,100.00</i></b>
	<b><i>Value of Volunteer Services</i></b>	<b><i>\$21,968.00</i></b>



## Training + Professional Development

### TRAINING + PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. Ensure that individuals serving Secaucus's Shade Tree Program have sufficient knowledge to make effective long-term planning decisions.
2. Ensure that tree inspections and evaluations follow accepted standard procedures and that the results are objective, technically correct and consistent.
3. Ensure that all tree planting and maintenance activities are completed using techniques based on the latest scientific knowledge and in accordance with industry standards.
4. Provide continuity in the overall level of knowledge and expertise within the Program as individuals leave the Program and new ones join.
5. Satisfy the requirements of the New Jersey Community Forestry and Assistance Act Training Skills and Accreditation Program.

### EXISTING PROGRAMS, POLICIES + PROCEDURES

1. ***Training Provisions + Funding***
  - a) Training and professional development opportunities in arboriculture and urban forestry continue to be made available to volunteers and employees serving Secaucus's Shade Tree Program. These opportunities include CORE training and continuing education as required under the New Jersey Shade Tree + Community Forestry Assistance Act.
  - b) The cost of training is funded through the participant's department or committee.
2. ***NJ Community Forestry's Training Skills + Accreditation Program***
  - a) At the time this Plan was prepared, the following had satisfied the CORE Training requirements of the New Jersey Shade Tree + Community Forestry Assistance Act:
    - i) (6) municipal employees
    - ii) (1) elected official
    - iii) (3) Shade Tree Program volunteers
3. ***Recent Training Completed***
  - a) Each year, employees and volunteers actively involved in the Shade Tree Program attend the NJ Shade Tree Federation Annual Meeting, which provide expert lectures on a variety of arboriculture and urban forestry subjects.

### CURRENT TRAINING NEEDS

The Town of Secaucus has evaluated its existing shade tree programs and personnel and identified the following areas in which training is currently needed or should be considered.

1. Ongoing tree hazard identification and evaluation for municipal employees with emphasis on detecting and evaluating the extent of internal wood decay and root stability in confined soil areas.
2. Alternative "tree-friendly" sidewalk repair techniques for municipal employees, the Town Engineer, and Town inspectors.
3. Current best-practices for tree planting and post-planting maintenance for municipal employees



**2020 – 2024  
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- and volunteers.
  - 4. Young tree structural pruning in accordance with ANSI A300 Standards for encouraging the development of structurally sound and non-conflicting branch structure in young trees for municipal employees and volunteers that complete pruning work.
  - 5. Ongoing training in safety requirements for tree maintenance operations for Department of Public Works personnel.
- 
- 1. ***Ongoing Training Programs***
    - a) *2020 – 2024*
      - i) Continue implementing the existing programs, policies + procedures listed above consistently and in a manner that maximizes the number of individuals who increase their level of expertise.
      - ii) Attend training programs, in addition to the following objectives, that address the Current Training Needs listed above as appropriate programs become available.
      - iii) Increase the depth of knowledge obtained by participating in half-day or full-day workshops dedicated to a single subject, in addition to attending the NJ Shade Tree Federation Annual Meeting.
  - 2. ***NJ Community Forestry's Training Skills + Accreditation Program***
    - a) *January – March, Annually*
      - i) Review training needs versus upcoming training opportunities.
      - ii) Ensure that the Town will accumulate the necessary continuing education credits as required under the New Jersey Shade Tree + Community Forestry Assistance Act by the end of each year.
      - iii) Schedule NJ Community Forestry CORE Training for additional individuals, as necessary to maintain compliance with New Jersey Shade Tree + Community Forestry Assistance Act requirements.
  - 3. ***Young Tree Structural Pruning Training***
    - a) *January – December 2021*
      - i) Train the Administrator of Tree Conservation, at least two Department of Public Works employees, and at least two Tree Committee members in specialized shade tree pruning techniques at an in-depth, hands-on workshop led by a qualified expert that emphasizes structural pruning for young trees in accordance with ANSI A300 standards to promote the development of a structurally sound trunk and crown form, minimize conflicts with roads and utilities, and minimize the need for severe pruning as the trees mature.
  - 4. ***Tree + Sidewalk Conflict Training***
    - a) *January – December 2022*
      - i) Train the Administrator of Tree Conservation, the Town Engineer, and other appropriate individuals in practical methods for correcting existing tree and sidewalk conflicts including alternative methods that have proven effective elsewhere by:
        - Attending a training workshop that includes real-time, hands-on examples of various sidewalk repair techniques in progress, if such a program becomes available or,
        - Arranging to visit and observe examples of such work at a neighboring municipality that has had prior success in mitigating tree and sidewalk conflicts.

**5. *Tree Planting Techniques Training***

**a) *January – December 2023***

- i) Train the Administrator of Tree Conservation, at least two Department of Public Works employees, and interested volunteers in street tree planting techniques via an in-depth, hands on program that emphasizes proper tree handling, proper hole preparation, planting at appropriate root collar depth, installation of root barriers to reduce sidewalk impacts, burlap and wire basket removal, backfilling, and follow-up watering and maintenance. The training should demonstrate current industry best practices and accepted standards and should be performed by a NJ Licensed Tree Expert or other experienced tree care professional.

**6. *Tree Hazard Evaluation Training***

**a) *January – December 2024***

- i) Train the Administrator of Tree Conservation, at least two Department of Public Works employees, and others responsible for inspecting trees to advance their skills in identifying and evaluating the severity of potential tree hazards using the latest information and techniques through an advanced level seminar. This training should include methods for detecting and evaluating the extent of internal decay and root stability in confined soil areas.



## Public Education, Awareness + Outreach

### PUBLIC EDUCATION, AWARENESS + OUTREACH GOALS

1. Continue to develop and maintain interest and active support for Secaucus's Shade Tree Program.
2. Encourage residents to volunteer and assist in promoting and completing various programs and projects, protecting trees, and beautifying the Town.
3. Promote the planting, protection, and proper care of trees on private property for the benefit of the entire community.
4. Educate the public in the value of environmental stewardship.

### EXISTING PROGRAMS, POLICIES + PROCEDURES

1. **Arbor Day**
  - a) Arbor Day celebrations continue to be held annually in Secaucus.
  - b) Arbor Day programs are organized by the Tree Committee, in cooperation with the Mayor and Council, other Town committees and departments, and local corporations, and typically involve projects and celebratory programs with students and faculty at all the local schools.
  - c) Celebrations have typically included poster contests, various environmental stewardship projects, tree plantings, tree seedling give-a-ways, readings and musical performances by students, donation of books to the school and public libraries, and presentation of the Town's Tree City USA awards.
  - d) Local print and television media coverage is a standard part of Secaucus's Arbor Day celebrations.
2. **Tree City USA + Other Awards**
  - a) Secaucus has been designated as a Tree City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation every year since 1993.
  - b) In 1994, the Town of Secaucus received the Green Communities Achievement Award for its establishment and implementation of a successful municipal tree program.
3. **Media**
  - a) Various announcements, such as Arbor Day celebrations, tree plantings, and other programs, are periodically published in the local *Secaucus Spectator* newspaper, on the Town's municipal TV channel, on the Town's official website.
  - b) Informational posts regarding trees and environmental stewardship in general are routinely posted on the Town website.
4. **Awareness + Outreach Programs**
  - a) Through the Environmental Department, the Town of Secaucus continually undertakes, actively promotes, and successfully implements a wide array of environmental initiatives, and strongly encourages its residents and businesses to do the same.
  - b) 2018 was declared a "Year of Climate Action" by the Town of Secaucus. Among many actions implemented and planned, the Town worked to conduct energy audits of its properties, installed LED lighting to dramatically reduce electric use in its municipal building,

**2020 – 2024  
OBJECTIVES**

and is working toward renewable energy technologies to fuel its vehicle fleet. In addition, it has negotiated to make climate-friendly technologies, such as solar panels, more readily available to residents.

- c) Secaucus's Tree Appreciation Campaign has successfully solicited and raised thousands of dollars from corporate partners, local businesses, and residents that goes directly to the planting of new tree canopy. Renewed every two years, this campaign raised approximately \$9,000 in 2016 and \$13,000 in 2018.
- d) Since 2010, Secaucus has held a Green Festival for residents to celebrate Earth Day. This event includes a variety of eco-friendly vendors and exhibits, hourly presentations, and river eco-cruises.
- e) The Town distributes a welcome pamphlet to all new residents, which includes a variety of information regarding Secaucus's environmental initiatives.

**1. Ongoing Public Education, Awareness + Outreach Programs**

**a) 2020 – 2024**

- i) Continue to implement and expand all existing public education, awareness, and outreach programs.

**2. Annual Arbor Day Programs**

**a) January – April, Annually**

- i) Continue to organize and conduct annual Arbor Day celebrations.
  - Continue to seek assistance from the Board of Education as well as local civic groups, local businesses, and others to help spread the workload and maximize exposure and attendance at the programs.
  - Vary the location, activities, and target audience each year to help increase interest and support for Secaucus's Shade Tree Program, awareness of the benefits of trees, and active environmental stewardship.

**3. Tree City USA**

**a) October – December, Annually**

- i) Continue to submit the annual application for designation as a Tree City USA through the National Arbor Day Foundation.
- ii) Prepare and submit the application for Tree City USA Growth Awards when eligibility requirements have been met.
- iii) Continue to advertise the designation in public relations materials (road signs, plaques, truck decals, stationary logo, etc.) throughout the community.

**4. Tree Benefits Education**

**a) 2020 – 2024**

- i) To help counter the accelerated removal of trees from private properties and rising sentiment against planting new trees on both public streets and private land – an apparent result of increasing concern about the safety of trees and/or a lack of appreciation of their benefits among some residents – Secaucus will develop and continually implement a multi-faceted and far-reaching long-term education program. The primary goal of this program will be to inform residents of the valuable benefits trees provide relative to their costs, encourage the planting of new shade trees, and encourage the protection and maintenance of existing shade trees, both public and private. This program is directly tied to working toward the Town's overall tree canopy cover goal.

- ii) Develop and produce educational materials for distribution that address the issues identified, such as:
  - The history of Secaucus, its Shade Tree Program, and the Town's long tradition of tree appreciation and care.
  - The physical, social, and economic value of trees to the community, the environment, and the economy.
  - The impact of trees in increasing property values.
  - A brief summary of Secaucus's ordinance requirements regarding the care and protection of public trees.
  - How to contact the Town regarding issues and concerns with public trees.
- iii) Partner with various civic groups, institutions, and businesses to promote tree planting goals and disseminate information consistently and effectively.
- iv) Continue to identify suitable methods of disseminating the materials through a variety of channels, such as:
  - Through the existing public education, awareness and outreach programs, policies and procedures outlined above.
  - The Town's official website.
  - Social media.
  - Press releases and educational articles in local newspapers.
  - Direct mail.
  - Outreach through houses of worship, civic groups, etc.
  - Speaking engagements.
  - School programs.
  - Scout groups.



## Tree Inventory + Assessment

### TREE INVENTORY + ASSESSMENT GOALS

1. Provide accurate baseline information upon which sound long-term management plans can be set, efficient, proactive maintenance programs can be established, and concise implementation decisions can be made.
2. Provide a system for accessing and utilizing inventory data in a manner that improves the efficiency and effectiveness of day-to-day tree maintenance activities.
3. Provide a basis for monitoring and evaluating changes in the tree population, the impact of management efforts over time, and progress toward the Overall Program Goals.

### EXISTING PROGRAMS, POLICIES + PROCEDURES

1. **Current Tree Inventory + Assessment**
  - a) A complete street tree inventory was originally completed in 1992 and updated in 2001. The Shade Tree Program routinely used this inventory to identify and quantify issues in the tree population, set program goals and objectives for improving the resource, and evaluate changes in the condition of individual trees. In time, the inventory grew too out of date to remain useful and was abandoned.
  - b) In 2001, an inventory was conducted in Schmidt's Woods, a 17-acre containing developed playground, municipal pool, and picnic areas, and a large natural woodland, one of the last remnant woodlots in the Hackensack Meadowlands. Individual trees were tallied and evaluated in the developed areas, and a sample-based inventory system was used to characterize the woodland. The findings of this study were used to immediately address priority shade tree concerns in developed area and invasive species and other issues in the woodland.
  - c) Over the past several years, Town employees and volunteers conducted a new inventory of street trees. Data was collected into an *i-Tree Streets* database and a variety of summary reports characterizing the current street tree population and the benefits it provides to the community were generated.
  - d) No current or past tree inventory data exists for the Town's 22 parks beyond the 2001 inventory of Schmidt's Woods.

### 2020 – 2024 OBJECTIVES

1. **Ongoing Tree Inventory + Assessment Programs**
  - a) **2020 – 2024**
    - i) Continue using existing street tree inventory data to:
      - Provide a basis for short- and long-term management decisions for selecting species for new plantings and improving the condition, resiliency, and sustainability of the tree population in a manner that is consistently directed toward the overall goals of the Shade Tree Program.
      - Determine the highest priority needs for tree maintenance and planting.
2. **Tree Canopy + Land Cover Analysis**
  - a) **January – March 2024**
    - i) Using current aerial imagery, appropriate GIS software, and the USDA Forest Service's *i-*

*Tree* software suite where appropriate, measure and characterize the extent of Secaucus's current overall tree canopy cover, including both public and private lands.

- ii) Assess the total size, relative percentage, and configuration of land in Secaucus in various pervious and impervious land cover types.
- iii) Using available analysis tools, estimate the atmospheric benefits and ecological benefits provided by the tree cover with regard to the removal of carbon and other pollutants.
- iv) To the extent feasible, complete "what if" analyses to estimate the potential increases in ecological services associated with efforts to increase Town-wide canopy cover and identify where additional canopy cover is likely to have the greatest impact.



## Tree Hazard Management

### TREE HAZARD MANAGEMENT GOALS

1. Minimize the risk of trees to public safety.

### EXISTING PROGRAMS, POLICIES + PROCEDURES

1. ***Tree Hazard Identification***

- a) Potentially hazardous tree conditions are generally identified via:
  - i) Ongoing observations by the Administrator of Tree Conservation, the Department of Public Works, and Tree Committee volunteers in the course of their daily activities.
  - ii) Service requests from adjacent property owners.

2. ***Tree Hazard Abatement Procedures***

- a) The Administrator of Tree Conservation evaluates the condition of all trees in question and determine needs for pruning, removal, or other treatments to correct the issues identified.
- b) Internal work orders for completion by the Department of Public Works or work lists for completion by outside contractors are created, prioritized and scheduled for completion immediately, when time and available resources permit, or at the appropriate time in the future, based upon the degree of hazard potential.

3. ***Record-Keeping***

- a) Records of inspections made, and maintenance work completed are maintained by the Administrator of Tree Conservation.

### 2020 – 2024 OBJECTIVES

1. ***Ongoing Tree Hazard Management Programs***

- a) *2020 – 2024*
  - i) Continue to implement all existing tree hazard management programs, policies, and procedures.
  - ii) Complete all priority maintenance work identified by the recent street tree inventory.
  - iii) Continue to address hazard abatement needs as they are identified in order of priority.

2. ***Tree Hazard Evaluation Training***

- a) *See Training + Professional Development, Objective #6 on page 22.*



### TREE PLANTING GOALS

1. Increase Secaucus's public tree population to, and perpetuate it at, maximum practical stocking.
2. Optimize and maintain tree species and age diversity.
3. Minimize future maintenance needs and costs.
4. Minimize conflicts between trees and sidewalks, buildings, utilities, and other public and private fixtures.
5. Improve aesthetic appeal, seasonal variation, and physical benefits to adjacent properties.

### EXISTING PROGRAMS, POLICIES + PROCEDURES

1. ***Planting Jurisdiction***
  - a) The Town currently plants trees:
    - i) In municipal rights-of-way and easements.
    - ii) On Town-owned properties.
    - iii) In Town parks.
2. ***Planting vs. Removal Ratio***
  - a) Over the past 5-years:
    - i) The Town of Secaucus planted an average of 268 new trees per year on its streets and public properties, ranging from 188 in 2016 to 343 in 2017.
    - ii) These plantings included 187 trees planted to create a landscape canopy on the Secaucus Greenway, adjacent to the Hackensack River and high school with the aid of a Community Stewardship Incentive Program grant from the NJ Forest Service in 2017.
    - iii) With the assistance of NJDOT, Secaucus planted two large buffer areas along State Highway Route 3 with various pines trees and other vegetation.
  - b) During this same 5-year period, the Town has removed an average of 36 public trees per year.
  - c) This planting to removal ratio has resulted in a substantial increase in Secaucus's public tree resource.
3. ***Planting Location + Tree Placement***
  - a) Planting locations are identified via:
    - i) Vacancies identified through the Street Tree Inventory.
    - ii) Vacancies created by the removal of dead or hazardous trees.
    - iii) Requests for street trees by adjacent property owners.
    - iv) Occasional public works capital improvement projects involving street trees.
  - b) Tree placement is determined by the Administrator of Tree Conservation in consultation with the Tree Committee and, when appropriate, the Town Engineer and/or Department of Public Works. Trees are placed:

- i) Within the right-of-way in the case of street trees. The Town generally does not plant trees on private property.
- ii) In a manner that will minimize future conflicts with above and belowground utilities, structures, hardscape fixtures, and traffic.
- iii) In a manner that is appropriate for the design and intended use of the area.

#### **4. *Species Selection***

- a) Species are selected by the Administrator of Tree Conservation in consultation with the Tree Committee. Where appropriate, property owners may select street tree species from a shortlist of species approved by the Town.
- b) Species are selected with consideration to:
  - i) Existing soil conditions, available growing space and above and belowground restrictions at each site.
  - ii) Goals for increasing species diversity in the street tree population.
  - iii) Insect and disease resistance and past performance.
  - iv) Availability of species and cultivars.

#### **5. *Tree Supply + Installation***

- a) Most public trees are procured directly by the Town and planted by Town personnel.
- b) Through its Sidewalk Safety Program, the Town will share the cost of repairing sidewalks damaged by Town trees and plant a new, appropriately sized tree with to help minimize future conflicts. In the past, root barriers have been installed to further minimize conflicts between the trees and existing infrastructure.

#### **6. *Post-Planting Care***

- a) Post-planting maintenance for new street trees includes:
  - i) Watering by adjacent property owners in accordance with instructions provided by the Town.
  - ii) Structural pruning and removal of stakes by the Department of Public Works after the trees are sufficiently established.

#### **7. *Funding + Sources***

- a) The cost of public tree planting completed over the past several years has been funded by:
  - i) Budget allocations by the Mayor and Council.
  - ii) The Town's Tree Appreciation Campaign through which residents may pay \$200 for a tree planted in the curb strip in front of their home, and donations are solicited from corporations and local businesses for planting throughout Secaucus.
  - iii) A \$30,000 Community Stewardship Incentive Program grant received in 2016 from the NJ Forest Service for the planting of 187 trees along the Secaucus Greenway.

## **2020 – 2024 OBJECTIVES**

### **1. *Ongoing Tree Planting Programs***

- a) *2020 – 2024*
  - i) Continue implementing all existing tree planting programs.

## **2. *Street Tree Stocking Goals***

### **a) *April – June 2021***

- i) Using data from the recent street tree inventory, calculate “maximum practical stocking” – the maximum number of public street trees that Secaucus’s streets support *and* the Town can effectively manage in accordance with all elements of this Plan, given available resources.
- ii) Calculate the number of trees that must be planted each year to achieve maximum practical stocking within 10, 20, 30, and 40 years with realistic allowances for existing tree mortality, transplant mortality, etc.
- iii) Establish a feasible target date for achieving maximum practical stocking based on these calculations. Although the tendency is to plant more trees faster, achieving maximum practical stocking over a longer period of time will result in more age diversity and more stability in the tree population over the long term.
- iv) Establish intermediate progress goals for increasing the level of stocking during each five-year management period to maintain consistent progress toward the long-term stocking goal.

### **b) *July 2021 and continually thereafter***

- i) Design and complete planting programs in accordance with the stocking goals and planting rates established.

## **3. *Street Tree Species Composition Guidelines***

### **a) *April – June 2021***

- i) Using data from the updated tree inventory, establish a long-term goal for an optimum street tree species mix that provides sufficient genus and species diversity, insect and disease resistance, etc.
  - No single genus should comprise more than 10% of the street tree population.
  - No single species should comprise more than 5% of the street tree population.
  - A variety of improved, insect and disease resistant cultivars should be favored over historically problematic species.
- ii) Establish intermediate progress goals for altering the existing street tree species composition by the end of each five-year management period (e.g. reducing Norway maples by 5% by 2030, keeping the number of Callery pears below 5%, etc.) to help maintain consistent progress toward the long-term goal.

### **b) *July 2021 and continually thereafter***

- i) Design and complete planting programs in accordance with the species composition goals set.
- ii) Vary the species planted from year to year to provide species diversity over all age classes and throughout the entire community.

### TREE MAINTENANCE GOALS

1. Improve and maintain the long-term health and structural condition of Secaucus's public tree population.
2. Maximize the service life of existing trees.
3. Minimize the risk of trees to public safety.
4. Maximize the cost-efficiency of tree maintenance activities.
5. Respond promptly and effectively to citizen complaints and service requests.
6. Optimize the balance between the benefits that trees provide to the community and the cost of maintaining them.

### EXISTING PROGRAMS, POLICIES + PROCEDURES

1. ***In-House Crews***
  - a) Department of Public Works personnel periodically perform limited tree pruning and removal work, including:
    - i) Pruning and removal of trees less than 15-feet in height.
    - ii) Clean-up of storm-damaged trees.
  - b) Department of Public Works personnel currently complete approximately:
    - i) 50% of all tree removal work.
    - ii) 80% of all tree pruning work.
    - iii) 100% of all stump removal work.
    - iv) 50% of all emergency tree work
  - c) The Department of Public Works is currently equipped with the following for tree maintenance:
    - i) (1) Chip truck
    - ii) (1) Chipper
    - iii) (1) Stump grinder
    - iv) (1) CAT loader
    - v) Augur attachment and bits
    - vi) (2) 350-gallon pickup mounted water tanks
    - vii) Various chainsaws, handsaws, and other related tools
2. ***Private Contractors***
  - a) Private tree maintenance contractors are routinely hired by the Department of Public Works to complete tree pruning and removal work that is beyond the capability of in-house personnel and equipment.

**3. *Inter-Local + Mutual Assistance Agreements***

- a) The Town of Secaucus currently does not have formal agreements with neighboring municipalities for the sharing of tree-related equipment and personnel.

**4. *Systematic Maintenance Programs***

- a) In the past, the Town lacked a program for systematically pruning trees on a regular, rotation basis. Over the past five years, however, it has begun pruning trees on a whole-street basis, where feasible, in an effort to work toward a routine pruning rotation.

**5. *Work Identification, Prioritization, Scheduling + Record-Keeping***

- a) Currently, tree maintenance needs are typically identified via:
  - i) Ongoing observations by the Administrator of Tree Conservation, the Department of Public Works, and Tree Committee volunteers in the course of their daily activities.
  - ii) Service requests from adjacent property owners.
- b) All work needs are scheduled and completed in order of priority.
- c) Records of tree maintenance work completed are maintained by the Administrator of Tree Conservation.

**6. *Tree Removal***

- a) It is the Town 's policy to not remove live public trees unless they pose a threat to public safety.
- b) In recent years, Secaucus has removed an average of 36 public trees per year.

**7. *Plant Health Care + Specialty Treatments***

- a) Specialty treatments, such as insect and disease controls, fertilization, and cabling and bracing are generally not completed on public trees.

**8. *Sidewalk Maintenance***

- a) By ordinance, individual property owners are responsible for maintaining public sidewalks adjacent to their property. To assist in this responsibility, Secaucus has a Sidewalk Safety Program in place in which the Department of Public Works will lift sidewalk slabs affected by tree roots and properly prune offending roots prior to the pouring of new slabs by the homeowner's contractor.
- b) The Tree Acceptance Incentive Program promotes the planting of "sidewalk-friendly" species and allows residents to select the type of trees to be planted adjacent to their property from its Approved Species list.
- c) The Town selects species and places street trees in a manner that will minimize future conflicts between trees and sidewalks.

**9. *Funding***

- a) The Department of Public Works operating budget typically covers the cost of tree maintenance work completed by its personnel and private contractors.

**2020 – 2024  
OBJECTIVES**

**1. *Ongoing Tree Maintenance Programs***

- a) *2020 – 2024*
  - i) Continue implementing all existing tree maintenance programs, policies, and procedures on a regular basis.

- ii) Continue to strive to implement and expand routine, systematic, whole-street pruning rotations to ensure that trees are pruned on a regular basis.

## **2. *Tree + Sidewalk Conflict Mitigation Procedures***

### **a) *July – September 2022***

- i) Review all existing programs, procedures, and ordinances relating to the identification and correction of conflicts between public trees and sidewalks.
- ii) Evaluate the costs, benefits, and level of success of the existing programs, procedures, and ordinances, as well as property owner satisfaction with the results.
- iii) Identify areas for improvement or expansion of the current programs.

### **b) *October 2022 – March 2023***

- i) Based on the findings, develop a single set of written procedures to be adopted and followed by all involved departments that will help minimize future sidewalk damage from tree growth while ensuring that the public trees receive equal consideration and are protected from unnecessary damage or removal.
- ii) Incorporate into the document:
  - Objective rating criteria for evaluating the level of impact and feasibility of repair versus tree removal.
  - Criteria for rating the existing tree's species and condition to determine justification for preservation versus removal and replacement.
  - Various alternative sidewalk repair techniques to consider where feasible, such as cutting round-outs in slabs, limited root pruning and slab leveling, mud jacking, etc. (*see Training + Professional Development, Objective #4 on page 21*).
- iii) Involve all responsible departments and individuals in the drafting and review of the document.

### **c) *April 2023 and continuously thereafter***

- i) Begin and continue implementing the Tree + Sidewalk Conflict Mitigation Procedures on a continuous basis.



## Tree Waste Recycling

### TREE WASTE RECYCLING GOALS

1. Minimize the cost of tree waste disposal to the Town.
2. Produce beneficial recycled products for use on public properties and by residents.

### EXISTING PROGRAMS, POLICIES + PROCEDURES

1. ***Recycling Facilities***
  - a) The Town does not currently own or operate a licensed recycling facility for processing vegetative waste generated by the Shade Tree Program and individual property owners.
  - b) The Town periodically rents a tub-grinder to process materials into usable recycle products.
2. ***Tree Waste Recycling Programs***
  - a) Through its Chipper Program, the Department of Public Works serves Secaucus residents by picking up and chipping woody vegetative waste weekly. The resulting waste is incorporated into the Town's recycling stream.
3. ***Material Processing, Use + Distribution***
  - a) *Leaves*
    - i) All collected leaves are delivered to a commercial recycling facility where they are composted to produce leaf compost and humus.
  - b) *Wood Chips*
    - i) Wood chips generated by Town crews are stockpiled for distribution to property owners at no cost and used to mulch trees and planting beds in parks and on Town properties.
    - ii) Secaucus High School and Middle School utilize a portion of the woodchips in their food waste recycling programs.
    - iii) Wood chips generated by contractors working for the Town and private property owners are removed and recycled by the contractor.
  - c) *Bulk Wood*
    - i) Bulk wood generated by Town crews is cut and split and made available to property owners at no cost
    - ii) Bulk wood generated by contractors working for the Town and private property owners is removed and recycled by the contractor.
    - iii) Excess bulk wood is delivered to a commercial recycling facility where it is processed to create mulch and other waste wood products.
4. ***Recycling Income***
  - a) Currently, the Town does not generate income through its tree waste recycling programs.

**2020 – 2024  
OBJECTIVES**

**1. *Ongoing Tree Waste Recycling Programs***

**a) 2020 – 2024**

- i) Continue implementing all existing tree waste recycling programs, policies, and procedures.





### TREE CARE DISASTER PLAN GOALS

1. Minimize the risk of catastrophic tree damage caused by weather, disease, and other forces.
2. Enable the Town to respond to tree-related emergencies promptly and efficiently.
3. Provide the Town with a viable plan and resources to repair or replace widespread tree damage or losses.

### EXISTING PROGRAMS, POLICIES + PROCEDURES

#### 1. *Tree Emergency + Disaster Threats*

- a) Severe weather remains the most serious threat to Secaucus's publicly and privately controlled tree populations.
- b) In addition to weather's threat to trees themselves, the widespread structural failure of trees poses a serious threat to electrical service, communications, and the Town's ability to provide critical emergency services.
- c) The risk of widespread tree damage and losses to biotic threats is currently considered moderate, but manageable, through increased species diversity and cultivar selection. Currently, there is particular concern regarding:
  - i) Emerald ash borer, which is now present throughout much of New Jersey and neighboring Pennsylvania and upstate New York. Except for some localized clusters, ash is believed to be a relatively small component of Secaucus's urban forest and the overall impact of emerald ash borer is expected to be relatively low.
  - ii) Spotted lanternfly, which has heavily infested nearby eastern Pennsylvania and was recently identified and triggered a quarantine in Warren, Hunterdon, and Mercer Counties.
  - iii) Bacterial leaf scorch, which remains a serious concern throughout southern and central New Jersey and a moderate concern in northern New Jersey.

#### 2. *Wildfire Protection*

- a) There has long been high risk of wildfire in much of the Hackensack Meadowlands due to its dense stands of marsh grasses and old landfills.
- b) While meadow fires could potentially impact homes and businesses in Secaucus, breaks provided by the Hackensack River, highways, and dense development, along with local firefighting teams trained and equipped to handle brush fires efficiently, have historically provided a reasonable level of protection.

#### 3. *Existing Emergency + Disaster Plans*

- a) The Town of Secaucus's State-mandated Emergency Operations Plan outlines procedures for vital services and cooperative efforts between all Town departments and neighboring communities during an emergency or disaster.
- b) The Town currently lacks a formal plan specific to the repair and replacement of widespread tree damage and losses beyond initial emergency response efforts. It is believed, however, that technically sound and responsible planting, preventive maintenance, and hazard identification and abatement efforts described elsewhere in this Plan will, over the long term, help reduce the vulnerability to certain catastrophic tree losses.

**2020 – 2024  
OBJECTIVES**

**4. *Emergency Response***

- a) The Department of Public Works, in cooperation with Secaucus Emergency Management, local utilities, and contractors, is responsible for clearing trees and debris to open roadways and permit restoration of electrical service and communications.
- b) The Department of Public Works and Town contractors are on 24-hour call to respond to tree-related emergencies.

**1. *Ongoing Programs***

- a) *2020 – 2024*
  - i) Continue implementing existing programs, policies, and procedures.
  - ii) Implement or expand technically sound and responsible planting, preventive maintenance and hazard identification and abatement programs, as detailed elsewhere in the Plan, to reduce the risk of future tree failures.



## Plan Preparation + Evaluation

### PLAN PREPARATION + EVALUATION GOALS

1. Continue to follow a well-defined, consistent, and efficient course of action toward the Overall Program Goals.
2. Continually evaluate the success of past programs and activities and make effective adjustments to address changing needs and conditions.
3. Remain in compliance with and eligible for the benefits of the New Jersey Shade Tree + Community Forestry Assistance Act.

### EXISTING PROGRAMS, POLICIES + PROCEDURES

1. Preparation of this third five-year Community Forestry Management Plan was the cooperative effort of the Town of Secaucus and their consulting arborist.
2. Goals and objectives contained in this Community Forestry Management Plan are based on the Town's implementation of its 2000 – 2018 plans and ongoing review of its progress.
3. Preparation of this Plan was made possible through a Green Communities Challenge Grant from the New Jersey Forest Service and the in-kind services of Town employees.

### 2020 – 2024 OBJECTIVES

1. **Annual Program Evaluation**
  - a) *December, Annually*
    - i) Evaluate the success of the year's activities and accomplishments relative to the goals and objectives contained within this Plan.
    - ii) Adjust programs and procedures, as necessary, based upon the evaluation.
    - iii) Prepare and submit the Annual Accomplishment Report to the New Jersey Forest Service in accordance with the requirements of the New Jersey Shade Tree + Community Forestry Assistance Act.
2. **Five-Year Evaluation**
  - a) *January – March 2024*
    - i) Evaluate the success of all objectives completed to date.
    - ii) Evaluate progress toward the overall goals of the Shade Tree Program.
    - iii) Begin formulating new objectives and, if necessary, adjustment existing policies, programs, and procedures for the 2025 – 2029 management period.
3. **2025 – 2029 Management Plan Development**
  - a) *April – September 2024*
    - i) Finalize new objectives and adjustments to existing policies, programs, and procedures for the 2025 – 2029 management period.
    - ii) Prepare and submit a Community Forestry Management Plan for 2025 – 2029.
  - b) *October – December 2024*
    - i) Obtain Plan approval from the New Jersey Community Forestry Council.



## Summary of 2020 – 2024 Objectives

Objectives / Tasks	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION</b>					
1. <i>Ongoing Administrative Programs</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue all existing administrative programs, policies, and procedures already in effect (p.17, #1.a.i)					
2. <i>Tree Conservation Ordinance Review</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Review Chapter 109 of the Town Code to evaluate whether it sufficiently addresses current needs and issues and whether maximum fines should be increased to those permitted by NJ State Statute (p.17, #2.a.i)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Review current enforcement policies and practices and identify ways to improve the success and consistency of enforcement actions taken (p.17, #2.a.ii)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Draft revisions to the ordinance, if necessary, with the ongoing review and input of all appropriate parties (p.17, #2.b.i)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Submit the revised ordinance for approval by the Mayor and Council (p.17, #2.c.i)					
<b>TRAINING &amp; PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>					
1. <i>Ongoing Training Programs</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue all existing training programs on a regular basis and maximize the number of individuals that increase their level of practical knowledge; Increase the depth of knowledge by attending half-day and full-day workshops dedicated to a single subject, in addition to attending the annual NJ Shade Tree Federation Conference (p.21, #1.a.i-iii)					
2. <i>NJ Community Forestry Training Skills &amp; Accreditation Program</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Review training needs and schedule training, as necessary, to accumulate sufficient CEU's and maintain Approved Status; Schedule individuals for CORE Training, as necessary (p.21, #2.a.i-iii)					
3. <i>Young Tree Structural Pruning Training</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Train the Administrator of Tree Conservation, at least 2 Department of Public Works employees, and at least 2 Tree Committee members in pruning young trees to promote the development of a structurally sound trunk and crown form, minimize conflicts and minimize the need for severe pruning in the future via a hands-on, in-house program (p. 21, #3.a.i)					

Objectives / Tasks	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>TRAINING &amp; PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, cont'd</b>					
4. <i>Tree + Sidewalk Conflict Training</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Train the Administrator of Tree Conservation, the Town Engineer, and other appropriate individuals in practical methods for correcting existing tree and sidewalk conflicts (p.21, #4.a.i)					
5. <i>Tree Planting Techniques Training</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Train the Administrator of Tree Conservation, at least 2 Department of Public Works employees, and interested volunteers in street tree planting techniques via an in-depth, hand-on program that emphasizes current industry standards and best practices (p.22, #5.a.i)					
6. <i>Tree Hazard Evaluation Training</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Train the Administrator of Tree Conservation, at least 2 Department of Public Works employees, and others appropriate individuals to recognize and evaluate potential tree hazards using the latest information and techniques via an advanced level seminar (p.22, #6.a.i)					
<b>PUBLIC EDUCATION, AWARENESS &amp; OUTREACH</b>					
1. <i>Ongoing Public Education, Awareness &amp; Outreach Programs</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue all existing public education, awareness, and outreach programs on a regular basis (p.24, #1.a.i)					
2. <i>Arbor Day Programs</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to plan, organize, and conduct annual Arbor Day celebrations; Continue to seek assistance from the Board of Education, local civic groups, local businesses, and others; Vary the location, activities, and target audience each year to widen interest and support for the Shade Tree Program (p.24, #2.a.i)					
3. <i>Tree City USA</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare and submit the annual application for designation as a Tree City USA; Prepare and submit applications for Tree City USA Growth Awards when eligibility requirements are met; Continually advertise the designation by displaying the program's promotional materials (p.24, #3.a.i-iii)					
4. <i>Tree Benefits Education</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement a multi-faceted and far-reaching education program to inform residents of the value of urban shade trees and encourage the planting, protection, and maintenance of trees on both public and private property; Develop and produce educational materials for distribution; Partner with various civic groups, institutions, and businesses to promote tree planting goals and assist in distributing information; Continue to identify and utilize a variety of methods for disseminating the materials and information (p.24, #4.a.i-iv)					

Objectives / Tasks	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>TREE INVENTORY &amp; ASSESSMENT</b>					
1. <i>Ongoing Tree Inventory + Assessment Programs</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue using existing tree inventory data to provide a basis for short and long-term decisions for species selection, improving the condition, resiliency, and sustainability of the public tree population in accordance with the overall goals of the Shade Tree Program, and determining the highest priority needs for tree maintenance and planting (p.26, #1.a.i)					
2. <i>Tree Canopy + Land Cover Analysis</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Using current aerial imagery, GIS software, and USDA Forest Service's i-Treetools, measure and characterize the extent of Secaucus' current overall tree canopy cover on both public and private lands; Assess the total size, relative percentage, and configuration of various pervious and impervious land cover types; Using available analysis tools, estimate the atmospheric and ecological benefits provided by the tree cover with regard to carbon and other pollutants; To the extent feasible, complete "what if" analyses to estimate the potential increases in ecological services associated with efforts to increase Town-wide canopy cover (p.26, #2.a.i-iv)					
<b>TREE HAZARD MANAGEMENT</b>					
1. <i>Ongoing Tree Hazard Management Programs</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue all existing tree hazard management programs; Complete all priority maintenance work identified by the recent street tree inventory; Continue to address hazard abatement needs as they are identified in priority order (p.28, #1.a.i-iii)					
<b>TREE PLANTING</b>					
1. <i>Ongoing Tree Planting Programs</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue all existing tree planting programs (p.30, #1.a.i)					
2. <i>Street Tree Stocking Guidelines</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Using current tree inventory data, calculate maximum practical stocking for Town street trees; Establish feasible goals for achieving maximum practical stocking with a suitable age structure within an appropriate time-frame (p.31, #2.a.i-iv)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Design and complete planting projects in accordance with the stocking goals and planting rates set (p.31, #2.b.i)					
3. <i>Species Composition Guidelines</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Using current tree inventory data, establish a long-term goal for optimum species composition in the street tree population; Establish intermediate progress goals for adjusting the existing species composition (p.31, #3.a.i-ii)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Design and complete planting projects in accordance with the goals set; Continue to plant a variety of species and cultivars and vary the species planted from year to year to maintain species diversity over all age classes (p.31, #3.b.i-ii)					

Objectives / Tasks	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>TREE MAINTENANCE</b>					
1. <i>Ongoing Tree Maintenance Programs</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue all existing tree maintenance programs, policies and procedures on a regular basis; Continue to strive to implement and expand routine, systematic, whole-street pruning rotations to ensure that trees are pruned on a regular basis (p.33, #1.a.i-ii)					
2. <i>Tree + Sidewalk Conflict Mitigation Procedures</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Review all existing programs, procedures, and ordinances relating to the identification and correction of conflicts between public trees and sidewalks; Evaluate the costs and benefits of the existing programs, as well as property owner satisfaction with the results; Identify areas for improvement or expansion of the current programs (p.34, #2.a.i-iii)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Based on the findings, develop a single set of written procedures to be adopted and followed by all involved departments to help minimize future conflicts while ensuring the public trees receive equal consideration and are protected from unnecessary damage or removal; Include in this document objective rating criteria for evaluating the level of conflict and feasibility of repair versus tree removal, criteria for rating the tree's species and condition to determine justification for preservation versus removal, and various alternative sidewalk repair techniques to consider where feasible; Involve all responsible departments and individuals in the drafting and review of this document (p.34, #2.b.i-iii)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Begin and continue implementing the Tree + Sidewalk Conflict Mitigation Procedures on a continuous basis (p.34, #2.c.i)					
<b>TREE WASTE RECYCLING</b>					
1. <i>Ongoing Tree Waste Recycling Programs</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue all existing tree waste recycling programs, policies and procedures (p.36, #1.a.i)					
<b>TREE CARE DISASTER PLAN</b>					
1. <i>Ongoing Programs</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue all existing programs, policies and procedures; Reduce risks via other elements of this Plan (p.38, #1.a.i-ii)					
<b>PLAN PREPARATION &amp; EVALUATION</b>					
1. <i>Annual Program Evaluation</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate the prior year's accomplishments, identify objectives not yet completed, and adjust programs, as necessary; Prepare and submit an <i>Annual Accomplishment Report</i> to NJFS (p.39, #1.a.i-iii)					

Objectives / Tasks	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>PLAN PREPARATION &amp; EVALUATION, cont'd</b>					
2. <i>Five-Year Evaluation</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate the Shade Tree Program's accomplishments during the current 5-year management period; Evaluate progress toward the overall goals of the Shade Tree Program; Begin formulating new objectives and program adjustments (p.39, #2.a.i-iii)					
3. <i>2025 – 2029 Management Plan Development</i>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Finalize new objectives and program adjustments and prepare and submit a Community Forestry Management Plan for the 2025 – 2029 management period (p.39, #3.a.i-ii)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Obtain State approval of the 2025 – 2029 Community Forestry Management Plan (p.39, #3.b.i)					





**PRIMARY  
ORDINANCES  
+ RESOLUTIONS**

1. Chapter 109 of the Town Code, *Tree Conservation*, which establishes and empowers the Administrator of Tree Conservation and the Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation, and provides for the planting, care, and protection of publicly controlled trees in the Town of Secaucus

## Chapter 109. Tree Conservation

[HISTORY: Adopted by the Mayor and Council of the Town of Secaucus 10-12-93 as Ord. No. 93-59. Amendments noted where applicable.]

### **§ 109-1. Title.**

This chapter shall be titled "Tree Conservation."

### **§ 109-2. Purpose.**

The purpose of this chapter is to establish regulation(s) of the planting of shade and ornamental trees and shrubberies now erected or hereafter planted within the Town of Secaucus, which regulations shall include planting, trimming, spraying, caring and protection thereof, the regulation and control of ground surrounding the same, the removal of any tree dangerous to the public safety, and the treatment to and of any tree situated on private property believed to harbor disease or insects.

### **§ 109-3. Authority of Mayor and Council; appointment of Administrator of Tree Conservation.**

- A. The Mayor and Council or the Administrator of Tree Conservation in consultation with the Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation shall enforce all provisions hereof.

The Mayor and Council shall appoint an Administrator of Tree Conservation to administer and enforce the provisions hereof, consistent with this chapter. Such appointee shall serve at the pleasure of the Mayor and Council. Such person shall be known as Administrator of Tree Conservation.

### **§ 109-4. Administrator of Tree Conservation.**

The Administrator of Tree Conservation shall enforce and administer the provisions hereof in consultation with the Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation. All matters respecting this chapter shall be addressed to the Administrator of Tree Conservation, and all decisions of the said Administrator shall be in writing, which writing shall disclose the matter of any application or determination by such Administrator stating expressly the recommendation of the Advisory Committee including a synopsis of minutes of the Advisory Committee respecting such matter.

### **§ 109-5. Powers and duties: Mayor, Council and Administrator of Tree Conservation.**

- A. Without limiting any other provisions hereof, the Mayor and Council or the Administrator of Tree Conservation in consultation with the Tree Advisory Committee of Conservation shall:
- (1) Exercise full and exclusive control over the regulation, planting, care of shade and ornamental trees, shrubbery and grass now located, or which may hereafter be planted in or upon any public street, park or parkway, except county parks or parkways, including the planting, trimming, spraying, care and protection of the same for the public good, and to regulate and control the use of the ground surrounding the same, so far as may be necessary for their proper growth, care, and protection.
  - (2) Require the removal of any tree, or part thereof, dangerous to public safety and to require the replacement of any tree removal with an appropriate species.
  - (3) Administer treatment to, or remove, any tree or shrub situated upon private property which is believed to harbor a disease or insects readily communicable to neighboring healthy trees or shrubs in the care of this town and enter upon private property for that purpose, with the consent of the owner thereof, provided the suspect condition is first confirmed by certification issued by or on behalf of the Department of Agriculture.
- B. The Mayor and Council or Administrator of Tree Conservation shall be empowered specifically to control and protect shade trees and shrubs, and shall enforce the provisions of this chapter:

- (1) No person shall do, or cause to be done, any of the following acts upon a public highway, public park or other public place within the town without the written permission of the Mayor and Council or the Administrator of Tree Conservation:
  - (a) Cut, trim, break, climb with spikes, disturb the roots of, or otherwise injure, or spray with any injurious chemical, or remove any living tree or shrub, or injure, misuse or remove any structure or device planted to support or protect such trees or shrubs.
  - (b) Plant any tree or shrub.
  - (c) Fasten any rope, wire electric attachment, sign or other device to a tree or shrub or to any guard about such tree or shrub.
  - (d) Close or obstruct any open space provided about the base of a tree or shrub to permit the access of air, water or fertilizer to the roots of such tree or shrub.
  - (e) Pile any building material, or mix any mortar or cement within six feet of a tree or shrub.
- (2) Tree topping. It shall be unlawful for any person to top any street tree. For the purpose of this chapter, "topping" is defined as the severe cutting back of limbs to stubs larger than three inches in diameter within the tree's crown to such a degree so as to remove the normal canopy and disfigure the tree. Trees severely damaged by storms or other causes, or certain trees under utility wires or other obstructions where other pruning practices are impractical, may be exempt from this ordinance at the determination of the Administrator of Tree Conservation.
- (3) Placing of guards. Throughout the period of erection, or repairs of any building or structure, or in the improvement of repairs of a highway, the owner thereof, or the contractor, shall place such guards around all nearby trees on the public highways, as shall effectually prevent injury to such trees.
- (4) Transmission of electric current. All persons including Public Utilities Commission having control over any wire for the transmission of an electric current along a public highway shall at all times guard all trees through which or near which such wires pass against any injury from the wires or from the electric current carried by them. The device or means used shall in every case be subject to approval of the Administrator of Tree Conservation.
- (5) Injurious liquids. No person shall permit any brine, gas, or injurious liquid or solid matter to come in contact with the stem or roots of any tree or shrub upon a public highway.
- (6) Tree maintenance. Property owners of trees extending over a town right-of-way or rubbing against town owned buildings or structures are required to trim, or remove same to the extent necessary to preserve same in a healthy condition or to prevent same from endangering the public welfare, interfering with public travel or traffic sidewalks, streets, highways or the right-of-way. As trees come to mature height, all branches over road must be elevated in a manner to allow free movement of traffic.
  - (a) Whenever it shall become the duty of any such owner of such tree to trim or remove such tree under the requirements of this chapter and the work as directed by the Administrator of Tree Conservation shall not have been done at the expiration of (30) days after personal notice to such owner or 35 days after mailing of a notice, postage prepaid, to the post office address of such owners, or satisfactory explanation shall not have been presented for such failure, then the Mayor and Council or the Administrator of Tree Conservation may authorize such work to be performed under their direction and paid for out of the monies of the town to the credit of the Town of Secaucus. The cost of said work shall be certified by the Mayor and Council or their designee to the Secaucus Chief Financial Officer. Upon filing the said certificate, the amount of the cost of such work shall be paid to the town by the property owner.
  - (b) If the Mayor and Council or their designee shall require the removal or remove any such tree as is referred to in this chapter, a replacement tree, approved by the Secaucus Tree Conservation Administrator, must be purchased by the owner, through the Town Tree Planting Program.
- (7) Enforcement.
  - (a) The requirements of this chapter shall be enforced by the Mayor and Council or the Administrator of Tree Conservation.
  - (b) The Mayor and Council or Administrator of Tree Conservation may order to be stopped forthwith any tree work or other activity which it or he/she believes is carried on in violation of any provisions of this chapter. The order shall be issued in writing within 24 hours and a copy served upon any person engaged in such tree work or such other activity. If no such person is present upon the property, then the order shall be served upon the owner of the property in question. Thereafter, any further work shall comply with the terms and conditions of any permit issued by the Administrator of Tree Conservation or its designee with respect to such property and the provisions of this chapter.

#### ***§ 109-6. Advisory Committee.***

- A. The Mayor and Council shall appoint persons to serve, without compensation, on an Advisory Committee called the "Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation" regarding tree conservation to make recommendations to the Mayor and Council or the Administrator of Tree Conservation with respect to any matters within the purview of this chapter. The Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation shall consist of six members excluding the Administrator of Tree Conservation, who shall each serve a term of one year commencing January of each year, except upon the initial appointment of members upon the adoption of this chapter who shall be appointed to serve a term expiring December 31 of the year following the date of appointment.
- B. The Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation shall meet regularly, at least four times per year. Minutes shall be kept at all meetings, and the same shall be made available for review by the public.
- C. Members of the Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation shall each have an equal vote. Only members present at a meeting of the Advisory Committee may vote. The Administrator of Tree Conservation shall chair all meetings and may participate at all meetings, but shall not vote except to break a tie.
- D. Meetings of the Tree Conservation Committee shall be called by the Mayor and Council or the Tree Conservation Administrator or any three members of the Advisory Committee, which meeting shall require three days notice to the Mayor and Council, Administrator of Tree Conservation and the Tree Advisory Committee.

#### ***§ 109-7. Establishment of rules, regulations, by-laws.***

The Mayor and Council may establish rules and regulations and amend the same, from time to time, as it deems necessary to enforce or effectuate the purpose hereof.

#### ***§ 109-8. Appeals.***

Any person wishing to appeal any decision of the Administrator of Tree Conservation and/or the Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation may do so by filing such an appeal with the Mayor and Council within 30 days of such written decision of the Tree Conservation Administrator and/or Advisory Committee stating the basis therefor and the relief requested whereupon the Mayor and Council shall conduct a hearing respecting such appeal; the Mayor and Council may affirm, reverse or remand the decision of the Administrator of Tree Conservation or the Advisory Committee.

Any person wishing to appeal any decision of the Mayor and Council shall seek such relief in a court of competent jurisdiction.

#### ***§ 109-9. Issuance of permits.***

[Amended 7-27-10 by Ord. No. 2010-28]

Requests for permits required by the provisions of this chapter for the performance of work should be directed to the Advisory Committee of Tree Conservation regarding Tree Conservation, c/o Superintendent of Public Works, 370 Secaucus Road, Secaucus, New Jersey 07094. A permit to replace a tree will require a \$200 payment to the town to defray the cost of the replacement tree. If a replacement tree dies of natural causes within 12 months of planting, the town will replace that tree at its sole expense.

#### ***§ 109-10. Budget.***

During the month of December of each year, the Administrator of Tree Conservation and the said Advisory Committee shall provide to the Mayor and Council of the Town of Secaucus a recommended estimated annual budget necessary for the proper operation of this chapter; the Mayor and Council shall annually appropriate such sums as they deem necessary for the proper operation and administration of this chapter.

#### ***§ 109-11. Penalties; jurisdiction of Courts.***

The Mayor and Council or Administrator of Tree Conservation may prescribe a fine for the violation of any of its rules or regulations adopted pursuant thereto, not to exceed \$200 for each violation, and the Secaucus Municipal Court shall have jurisdiction to act on such violations as the Mayor and Council or Administrator of Tree Conservation shall enact. The Court may impose any such other penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation or penalty as may be provided by law and impose such decision to enforce the provisions and intent of this chapter. Each day that such violation shall continue, shall be deemed to be a separate and distinct offense.