



Abington Township Master Tree Action Plan

PURPOSE AND PARTNERSHIPS

The purpose of this plan is to provide an integrated set of goals, objectives and actions that together will help to sustain Abington's urban forest over the coming decades.

This plan was developed through close collaboration among the Abington Township Comprehensive Plan Development Team, the Abington Township Shade Tree Commission (STC), Township leadership, and community partners. Partners consist of Pennsylvania TreeVitalize, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service Philadelphia Field Station, and 3 local watershed associations (Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust, Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership (TTF-WP), Inc. and Wissahickon Trails).

Funding for this work was provided by the TreeVitalize Community Forest Management Program and Abington Township. In-kind planning services were provided by the Abington STC.

"Imagine if there were one single action that city leaders and individuals could take ... to reduce obesity & depression, improve productivity, boost educational outcomes and reduce incidence of asthma & heart disease..."

There is... Plant and invest in urban trees."

Mindy Maslin, PHS Tree Tenders Program Manager

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INTRODUCTION

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF TREES

Trees perform. For every dollar we invest in a tree, studies conducted in cities and towns across the United States show that we get back between 2 and 5 dollars in economic, environmental, and social benefits.¹ For example:

- Trees intercept and infiltrate stormwater into the soil, thereby reducing flooding.
- Trees clean our air and water, thereby keeping us healthy.
- Trees lower air temperatures, thereby reducing the heat island effect.
- Trees reduce energy costs and increase property values.
- Trees enhance physical and mental health.
- Trees add beauty, lend a sense of place, and enhance our quality of life.

Recognizing the importance of investing in our forest, in 2020 Abington Township contracted with the USDA Forest Service Philadelphia Field Station to assess its urban tree canopy, how it has changed and how it is distributed. This analysis informed the priorities laid out in this plan.

The purpose of this plan is to provide a community roadmap for sustaining Abington Township's urban forest. It represents an integrated set of goals, objectives, and actions for the years 2023 to 2033 that will be instrumental in achieving Abington's shared vision. The plan's higher-level goals, strategies and vision are described below.

This plan is also meant to be incorporated into Vision2035: Abington Township's Comprehensive Plan. The Township Comprehensive Plan is one in which all members of the community – residents, businesses, employees and visitors – experience a high quality of life, in which the health of the natural environment and the health of the general public is intrinsically linked and is highly valued and protected. Our urban forest – the collection of trees, other vegetation, and water within Abington Township – is essential to sustaining our natural environment, our public health, our property values, and our vibrant community.

Acknowledgements: The Abington Township Shade Tree Commission provided leadership for the development of this plan. The project was supported by the Pennsylvania TreeVitalize Community Forest Management Program, and benefited from close collaboration among Township staff, appointed boards, and partners serving the Tookany/Tacony-Frankford, Pennypack and Wissahickon watersheds, whose headwaters are situated in Abington Township.

¹ Northrop et al, App. G: https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/books/book_2022_zipperer_001.pdf; https://www.fs.usda.gov/psw/news/2011/110308_arboday.shtml. For calculations for individual property owners: <https://outtrees.itreetools.org/#/>; <http://www.treebenefits.com/calculator/index.cfm>.

II. ABINGTON'S URBAN FOREST

Following are highlights of the urban tree canopy (UTC) analysis of Abington's trees, conducted in 2020. This analysis was published as a story map titled "Our Urban Forest: A Call to Action" in June 2021 (Appendix II), <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ed7e547aeaed454ea5dd44c4b1be08c0>.

Average Canopy Coverage

Tree canopy is the surface area of the land covered by the leaves and branches of all standing trees when viewed from above. Using aerial imagery, the tree canopy was estimated for the years 2004 and 2017 to be 48% and 42%, respectively.

Canopy Decline

While 42% canopy sounds like a lot of trees, Abington lost trees at an alarming rate. Simply put, on average, Abington lost approximately 1 in 8 trees during the period 2004 to 2017. This trend will continue unless systematic means are put in place to preserve existing trees and plant replacement trees.

Loss in Value

The loss in canopy cover represents an ongoing loss of over \$250,000 per year in just 3 ecosystem services: stormwater management, improved air quality, and carbon sequestration.

Watersheds at Risk

Low or declining canopy equates to declining watershed health. Abington overlays the headwaters of tributaries to the Pennypack, Tookany and Wissahickon watersheds. Trees growing anywhere within these valuable headwaters contribute directly and substantively to mitigation of stormwater runoff and enhanced stream health. The Tookany Creek and Sandy Run (Wissahickon) headwaters in Abington have an average 37% canopy cover, while tributaries to the Pennypack average 51% to 63% canopy cover.

Urban Heat Island Effects

Trees cool neighborhoods and reduce urban heat island effects. The major road corridors and more densely developed areas have fewer trees and therefore tend to be hotter than parks and lower density developed areas.

Equity

Abington's trees are not uniformly distributed. Tree canopy distribution by ward ranges from 28% coverage in Ward 5 (approximately 1 tree per person) to 63% in Ward 1 (approximately 7 trees per person).

Ownership

Approximately 84% of Abington's current urban forest lies on private lands, with 74% residential and 10% commercial. Private engagement in sustaining the urban tree canopy is essential and will require private-public partnerships, as 92% of the plantable space in the Township is outside of direct municipal control.

III. INDICATORS OF SUSTAINABILITY

The STC has used a matrix provided by the Davey Tree Expert Company which defines the sustainability of an urban forest as a function of trees, people, and management approach. For each of these factors, this matrix allows a municipality to assess specific indicators of sustainability for their urban forest. The STC partnered with the USDA Forest Service Philadelphia Field Station to assess Abington Township’s tree canopy according to this model. Summary tables of Abington’s strengths and weaknesses are shown below, and a detailed assessment is included in Appendix III. Abington’s current performance relative to sustaining our urban forest is:

The Trees: Low to moderate performance.

- The canopy is in decline and is not equitably distributed.
- Many neighborhoods as well as the Sandy Run and Tookany/Tacony-Frankford watersheds are underserved by trees.
- Age, diversity, condition, and species suitability have not been assessed.

	Indicator	Performance Level
The Trees	Sustainable Urban Tree Canopy	Low
	Equitable Distribution	Low
	Size/Age Distribution of Street Trees	Low
	Condition of Public Trees - Streets, Parks	Moderate
	Condition of Public Trees - Natural Areas	Low
	Condition of Trees on Private Property	Moderate
	Species Diversity of Public Trees	Moderate
	Suitability (Right Tree Right Place)	Moderate

The Players: Low to good performance.

- There is a pervasive lack of awareness among citizens, landowners, and Township staff of the value of trees.
- Coordination of decisions and actions regarding trees across all Township departments and appointed boards is informal and insufficient.
- On the positive side, Abington has established long-term committed partnerships within the green industry and is working to establish and advance local urban forestry goals.

	Indicator	Performance Level
The Players	Neighborhood Action	Moderate
	Large Private Landholder Involvement	Low
	Green Industry Involvement	Good
	Township Cooperation	Moderate
	Funder Engagement	Moderate
	Utility Engagement	Low
	Developer Engagement	Low
	Public Awareness	Moderate
	Regional Collaboration	Moderate

The Management Approach: Low to good performance.

- The Township code lacks provisions for tree preservation, protection, and replacement.
- Current staffing and management systems are insufficient to provide the necessary leadership, professional expertise, stewardship, and communications necessary to sustain the urban forest.
- On the positive side, volunteer capacity for stewarding the urban forest has grown substantially during the past decade through participation in the Tree City USA program and an active and effective Shade Tree Commission that is partnered closely with regional expertise and funding.
- Additionally, in 2020, a thorough Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) Assessment (“Our Urban Forest: A Call to Action”) was completed to inform the development of this 10-year Master Tree Action Plan (Appendix II).

	Indicator	Performance Level
The Mgmt Approach	Tree Inventory	Moderate
	Canopy Assessment	Good
	Management Plan	Moderate
	Risk Management Program	Moderate
	Maintenance of Publicly-Owned Trees	Low
	Maintenance of Natural Areas	Moderate
	Planting Program	Moderate
	Tree Protection Policy	Low
	City Staffing and Equipment	Low
	Funding	Moderate
	Disaster Preparedness & Response	Moderate
	Communications	Moderate

IV. SELECTED CHALLENGES

Without action, tree canopy decline is likely to accelerate. Contributing factors include lack of awareness and commitment to preserving and replacing trees, conflicts with other infrastructure, insect pests and other biological diseases, and climate change.

Awareness & Commitment: Effective management of our urban forest requires an awareness of the value of mature trees and a long-term commitment and partnership among Township leadership, Township staff, citizens, and partners to preserve and replace trees in a manner that optimizes tree health and canopy coverage. This collective awareness and systematic effort, supported by adequate funding, will be essential to protecting the trees we have and to establishing the trees that will serve our future generations.

Conflicts With Infrastructure: In order for trees to grow to maturity and deliver maximum benefits, we must address current and future conflicts with infrastructure such as buildings, sidewalks and utilities. This requires ensuring compatibility with both aboveground and underground infrastructure.

Climate Change: With climate change, we can expect more severe weather events that both damage trees and increase risk to people and property from damaged trees. During the coming 50 to 100 years, we can expect a shift to a warmer hardiness zone that will place further stress on some species that currently thrive here.

Pest and Disease Risk: Abington's tree canopy is presently experiencing significant decline due to pests such as the emerald ash borer and spotted lanternfly, as well as competition from invasive vines. Deer are another significant threat to our forested areas. We can expect increasing insect and disease pressures associated with a warmer, moister climate, and increasing competition from invasive plant species and deer.

V. STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Ongoing stakeholder input has been essential to development of the Master Tree Action Plan and will continue to be so throughout its adoption and implementation. The following steps have been taken to begin this process.

Community-based Visioning: Four public visioning workshops were held in late 2019 as part of the Comprehensive Plan Development Project. Residents described a future state that emphasizes pleasant residential areas, a thriving community, vibrant destinations, healthy people and environment, and responsive government. Many spoke specifically about the value of green spaces, the importance of a generous shade tree canopy and good access to parks and open space.

Discussion of Urban Tree Canopy Assessment: In May 2020, a series of presentations was made to share information and gather comment on the preliminary results of the Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) Assessment. Venues included a pre-recorded presentation to support the May 2020 meeting of the Board of Commissioners and online meetings to engage in dialogue with the 3 relevant watershed associations (Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust [PERT], Tacony/Tookany-Frankford Watershed Partnership [TTF-WP] and Wissahickon Trails) and key partners (Pennsylvania Horticulture Society and DCNR).

Selection of Goals and Objectives: The STC has hosted monthly public online meetings since May 2020 during which the higher-level goals and objectives were formulated. Phone interviews among Township staff and members of the STC and Environmental Advisory Council were conducted in August 2020 to refine higher-level goals and objectives, and to begin to identify the most important steps to take during the first 2 to 3 years of plan implementation.

Review and Presentation of Draft Plan: The draft plan was reviewed by Township staff, the Montgomery County Planning Commission, the USDA Forest Service Philadelphia Field Station (the source of the UTC analysis), the community watershed associations noted above, and the Pennsylvania TreeVitalize Community Forest Management Program (funder). The results of the UTC assessment and the draft Master Tree Action Plan were presented publicly in a story map linked to the Township GIS system ("Our Urban Forest: A Call to Action, June 1, 2021, <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ed7e547aeaed454ea5dd44c4b1be08c0>). The draft plan was also presented at the Advanced PHS Tree Tenders Training in November 2020 and at the 2021 Tree City USA National Conference.

VISION, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Inspired by the above assessment of our urban forest, sustainability indicators and stakeholder input, the following vision, goals, and strategies were formed. They are intended to serve as the guiding basis for the supporting objectives and actions that are recommended in this plan.

I. Vision

Building from Abington Township's Vision2035, we envision:

A sustainable urban forest that

- Is dominated by large mature native canopy trees of broad age and species diversity.
- Grows in harmony with and enhances the built environment.
- Is distributed equitably such that all citizens enjoy shady neighborhoods and ready access to woodlands.
- Protects our streams, thereby providing clean water and mitigation of flooding.
- Is resilient to climate change and invasive pests, plants, and animals.
- Promises to serve generations to come, given the above.

A community that

- Celebrates trees and their myriad of benefits to public health, our sense of place and our connection to the natural environment.
- Acts to preserve and enhance canopy coverage.
- Invests in trees through the municipal budget for the care of public trees and private and public funds for the care of trees on private properties.
- Volunteers time, treasure, and talent towards sustaining the urban canopy for this and future generations.

A management approach that

- Demonstrates a long-term commitment, recognizing that effective management of trees extends well beyond a given human lifetime.
- Aggressively preserves what we have and mitigates conflicts with the built environment.
- Plans to sustain our tree canopy from the earliest stages of land development.
- Supports individual homeowners in making good decisions, planting, and caring for trees.
- Maximizes our return on investment.

II. Goals

A thoughtful analysis of Abington's tree canopy, the players involved in making decisions about trees, and associated management systems informs the following "Big 3 Goals" for sustaining Abington Township's urban forest:

Goal 1. Increase Education and Engagement

Enlist all citizens, community service providers and Township leadership in understanding and valuing Abington's urban forest. Support them in caring for mature trees and planting new trees on public and private lands.

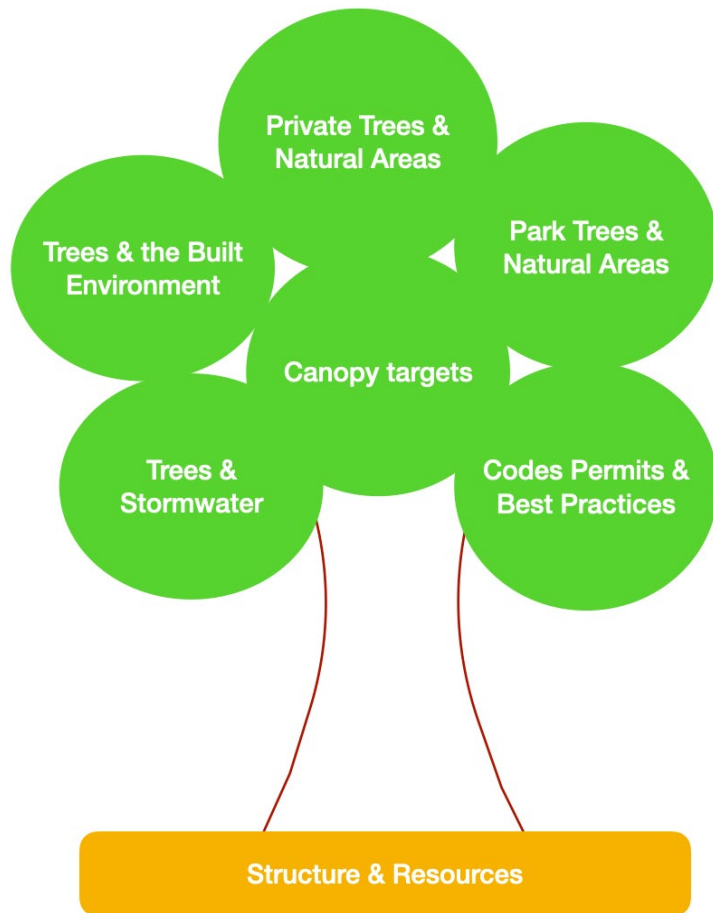
Goal 2. Maintain Existing Canopy and Expand Canopy Coverage

Preserve existing canopy and plant to replace losses. Establish large mature canopy trees wherever possible, thereby maximizing return on investment. Actively protect woodlands on public and private properties. Create a more equitable distribution of canopy across neighborhoods and watersheds.

Goal 3. Improve Canopy Quality and Ecological Function

Systematically manage invasive pests, plants, and animals that put existing tree canopy at risk. Expand the diversity of tree species and plant in a manner that mitigates conflict between trees and the built environment. Focus on planting locally native trees with high ecological value.

III. Strategies for Sustaining Abington’s Urban Forest



Seven long-term strategies are recommended to set the stage for a sustainable tree canopy that will be enjoyed for generations to come.

1. **Tree Canopy Targets:** We will champion and refine sustainable tree canopy targets and measure progress, guided by Vision2035, the urban tree canopy assessment, site inspections and public input.
2. **Park Trees and Natural Areas:** We will actively manage trees and woodlands within all Township parks and natural areas in a manner that sustains our urban tree canopy.
3. **Private Trees and Natural Areas:** We will educate, engage and support property owners in understanding and acting to preserve, protect, plant and care for trees that are appropriate for their properties.
4. **Trees and Stormwater:** We will prioritize, protect, and enhance tree canopy within natural areas, including

riparian areas, thereby maximizing the stormwater interception and infiltration capacity that trees provide.

5. **Trees and the Built Environment:** We will plan for and manage trees and canopy as an essential utility within the built environment in a manner that optimizes tree and community health and safety and minimizes maintenance expense.
6. **Code, Permits and Enforcement:** We will revise the Township Code to proactively preserve, protect, and replace trees, and support implementation with clear communications and effective processes.
7. **Structure and Resources:** We will create an engaged team that balances the efforts of Township staff, volunteers, and partners, and support them with the training, resources, and processes to implement this plan.

SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES AND MILESTONES

For each Strategy, a set of supporting Objectives and Milestones have been identified. Recognizing that many objectives rely on several years' efforts, suggested milestones are offered at 3-year intervals. They are presented here in a condensed form for easy reference. The objectives and supporting actions are detailed in the next section.

Strategy 1: Establish and Refine Urban Tree Canopy Priorities

We will champion and refine sustainable tree canopy targets and measure progress, guided by the Township Comprehensive Plan, UTC assessment, site inspections and public input.

Supporting Objectives	Milestones 2023-2025	Milestones 2026-2028	Milestones 2029-2031
Established UTC Targets	Broad awareness and endorsement of UTC targets	Refined targets	Refined targets
MTP Integrated with Township Plans	Comprehensive, Stormwater, Parks, Economic Development, Zoning, SALDO	Ongoing	Ongoing
Neighborhood Tree Priorities Established	Sandy Run watershed	Tookany/Tacony-Frankford watershed	Pennypack watershed
Community Service Tree Priorities Established	Abington School District	Other properties with woodlands , eg, Hallowell, Baederwood	Broader outreach
Commercial Priorities Established	Town Centers	Parking Lots	Shopping Centers

MTP: Master Tree Plan; SALDO: Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance; UTC: urban tree canopy

Strategy 2: Manage Park Trees and Natural Areas

We will actively manage trees and woodlands within all Township parks and natural areas in a manner that sustains our urban tree canopy.

Supporting Objectives	Milestones 2023-2025	Milestones 2026-2028	Milestones 2029-2031
Inspections & Work Plans	Routine annual inspections	GIS-based work plans	Comprehensive tree planting and maintenance plans in place for all parks
Tree Protection	Tree guards for young trees and tree protection zones during construction	Mowing contract includes provision for tree protection	
Tree Planting & Aftercare	Expanded Tree Tenders group Summer intern for aftercare	Planting program lead by Parks Department	Active Friends Group for every park
Natural Area Stewardship	Ongoing: AWS & BSGP projects	Revised mowing schedules In-house meadow management	Stewardship plan in place for each natural area
Invasive Management	Master plan for invasive plant management in place	DCNR implementation grant for invasive s management	Broad-based implementation of invasive s management

AWS: Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary; BSGP: Boy Scout Game Preserve; DCNR: (PA) Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources

Strategy 3: Manage Private Trees & Natural Areas

We will educate, engage and support property owners in understanding and acting to preserve, protect, plant and care for trees that are appropriate for their properties .

Supporting Objectives	Milestones 2023-2025	Milestones 2026-2028	Milestones 2029-2031
Hands-On Learning and Stewardship	Expanded student service learning program	Partnership events: BBNC, PERT, PHS	Established partnership programs
Homeowners	Free tree giveaways	Free tree giveaways	Ongoing
Community Service Providers	Communications & education plan	Expand annual tree sales	Ongoing
Businesses	Communications & education plan	Pilot joint projects	Ongoing

BBNC: Briar Bush Nature Center; PERT: Pennypack Environmental Restoration Trust; PHS: Penna. Horticultural Society

Strategy 4: Utilize Trees for Stormwater Management

We will prioritize, protect and enhance tree canopy within natural and riparian areas, thereby maximizing the stormwater interception and infiltration capacity that trees provide.

Supporting Objectives	Milestones 2023-2025	Milestones 2026-2028	Milestones 2029-2031
Planning	Stormwater Management plan	Plan implementation	Plan implementation
Stormwater BMPs	Case study of AWS RSWC feature	Advocacy - preservation woodlands as essential to stormwater management	TBD
Outreach and Education	Case studies of natural BMPs that have been applied in Abington	Educational features at AWS Phase 2 project area	Educational features at additional locations
Trees for Riparian Areas	Prioritized list of riparian restoration projects	Restoration plans in place, in partnership with watershed organizations	Grants to support riparian tree planting
Streambank Restoration	USACE design for the Sandy Run Creek	Implementation of USACE design at Roychester and Hallowell Parks	Scope and funding to restore tributaries within additional properties

AWS: Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary; BMPs: best management practices; RSWC: regenerative stormwater catchment; USACE: US Army Corps of Engineers

Strategy 5: Integrate Trees and the Built Environment

We will plan for and manage trees and canopy as an essential utility within the built environment in a manner that optimizes tree and community health and safety and minimizes maintenance expense.

Supporting Objectives	Milestones 2023-2025	Milestones 2026-2028	Milestones 2029-2031
Education & Outreach	Detailed how-to's on Township web site	Tailored communications	Deeper training on selected topics
Design Standards	ISA Best Management Practices	Tailored checklists for planning and review of landscape design	Ongoing
Inspection & Maintenance	Pedestrian and sightline safety & utility clearance	Preventative maintenance of hazardous trees	Ongoing
Demonstration	Case studies of existing 'RTRP'	Green parking lot	Public Works buffer
Street Trees & Village Greens	Work plan in place for maintenance, removal and replacement	Initial village green	Additional village greens

ISA: International Society of Arboriculture ; RTRP : "right-tree-right-place"

Strategy 6: Establish and Enforce Code & Permits to Sustain Tree Canopy

We will revise the Township Code to proactively preserve, protect and replace trees, and support implementation with clear communications and effective processes.

Supporting Objectives	Milestones 2023-2025	Milestones 2026-2028	Milestones 2029-2031
Code Revision	Landscaping Article of the Zoning Ordinance	SALDO re-write	Incremental improvements
Education & Outreach	Guidance document for tree plan List of recommended trees	Selected case studies	Ongoing
Permit and Escrow	Supporting processes in place	Incremental improvements	Ongoing

SALDO: Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance; UTC: urban tree canopy

Strategy 7: Establish Structure and Resources Necessary to Implement this Plan

We will create an engaged team that balances the efforts of Township staff, volunteers and partners, and support them with the training, resources and processes to implement this plan.

Supporting Objectives	Milestones 2023-2025	Milestones 2026-2028	Milestones 2029-2031
Steering Committee	Steering Committee in place, lead by Parks Director	Ongoing	Ongoing
Internal Staffing & Resources	Detailed staffing plan	Enhanced internal capacity	Ongoing
Appointed Boards	Aligned on duties and responsibilities relevant to trees	Ongoing	Ongoing
Professional Services	Ordinance adoption, parks inspections, invasives management plan	Ongoing	Ongoing
Volunteer Base	Expanded Tree Tenders group in place	Forest Stewards group in place	Friends of Parks groups in place
Strategic partnerships	Synergies identified	Pilots	Growth
Grants Strategy	5-year strategy defined	5-year strategy renewed	5-year strategy renewed

DETAILED OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

Strategy 1. Establish and Refine Urban Tree Canopy Priorities

We will champion and refine sustainable tree canopy targets and measure progress, guided by Vision2035 (the Township Comprehensive Plan), UTC assessment, site inspections and public input.

Objective	2023-2025	2026-2028	2029-2031	RESPONSIBILITIES/ PARTNERS
ESTABLISH TREE CANOPY TARGETS. Begin with goals derived from the 2020 UTC assessment. Refine goals annually to incorporate learnings from field work.				
Refine and communicate canopy goals, priorities, and progress.	Annual report	Annual report	Annual report Conduct a UTC analysis in 2025 and every 5 years thereafter.	Parks Director, STC Chair
INTEGRATION WITH TOWNSHIP PLANS. Integrate tree canopy targets into all major Township plans and procedures that impact trees.				
Integrate tree canopy goals with Township plans and code updates that are relevant to tree canopy: Vision2035, Stormwater, Parks & Open Space, and Economic Development Plans; SALDO & Zoning revisions.	Identify opportunities for integrating tree canopy targets into these plans Ensure STC representation in Stormwater Management Plan and Parks & Open Space development teams	Ongoing- participate in township plan development to ensure that tree canopy targets are integrated into these plans	Ongoing- participate in township plan development to ensure that tree canopy targets are integrated into these plans	Commissioner, Professional Services

<p>NEIGHBORHOOD TREE CANOPY PRIORITIES. Develop more specific targets for neighborhoods. Focus on one watershed per year for 3 years. Conduct a combination of surveys and inventories to build understanding of where municipal trees are wanted and needed, and therefore how to prioritize.</p>				
<p>Conduct neighborhood focus groups and identify neighborhood-specific tree priorities.</p>	<p>Sandy Run watershed</p>	<p>Tookany/Tacony-Frankford watershed</p>	<p>Pennypack watershed</p>	<p>Professional Services</p>
<p>COMMUNITY SERVICE PROPERTIES. Develop more specific targets for community service properties. Abington School District (ASD) is a first priority since these properties are integral to the Abington Township Open Space Plan and it provides the opportunity to grow their service-learning program. Preservation of woodlands is essential to sustaining the tree canopy. Prioritize areas adjacent to public woodlands, thereby maximizing the size of contiguous woodlands.</p>				
<p>Identify opportunities for canopy enhancement on community-service properties.</p>	<p>Focus on ASD properties</p>	<p>Focus on other properties with woodlands or large open space acreage</p>	<p>Broader outreach</p>	<p>Professional services</p>
<p>Pilot canopy enhancement on selected properties.</p>	<p>Fully support TTF-WP initiatives Partner with the ASD Environmental Science Club to steward Baederwood Park</p>	<p>ASD Pilot tree planting on school properties</p>	<p>Pilots on additional community-service properties</p>	<p>Community-service property owners with support from STC and the watershed associations</p>
<p>COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES. Develop more specific targets for commercial properties. Pilot best done on a Township property, to lead by example.</p>				
<p>Identify opportunities to create significant green space within commercial properties.</p>	<p>Town centers-transition from street trees to village greens</p>	<p>Parking Lots-systematic plan for greening</p>	<p>Shopping Centers-systematic plan for greening</p>	<p>Planning with support of professional services</p>

Pilot selected opportunities.		Village Green pilot	Green Parking Lots pilot	Construction Services with support of STC and watershed associations
Grow partnerships and canopy projects based on pilot results.	Ongoing dialog	Ongoing dialog	Ongoing dialog	Commercial property owner, community groups and watershed associations, with Township support

Strategy 2. Manage Park Trees and Natural Areas

We will actively manage trees and woodlands within all Township parks and natural areas in a manner that sustains our urban tree canopy.

RECOMMENDATION	2023-2025	2026-2028	2029-2031	RESPONSIBILITIES/ PARTNERS
<p>INSPECTIONS and WORK PLANS. Begin by establishing regular inspections that inform planning and operations. Follow with work plans to protect, plant and care for trees, and to provide stewardship to natural areas. Systematic change is needed. Anticipate that much of the work in the early years will be in defining specific goals and then creating and piloting supporting plans.</p>				
<p>Establish routine inspection of trees, riparian areas and woodlands within each township property.</p>	<p>Create a checklist and tailor as needed for each property. Include assessment of quality and diversity of trees, tree protection, invasive plant management needs, trees to be removed and planted</p>	<p>Integrate the inspections into the township GIS system</p>	<p>Systematically engage Friends of Parks in parks inspections</p>	<p>Parks Department with STC support</p>
<p>Develop an annual public tree plan based on site inspections, which includes preservation, planting, and post-planting care.</p>	<p>Assess the quality and diversity of existing trees</p>	<p>Integrate the annual tree and invasive management plans into the township GIS system</p>	<p>Systematically engage Friends of Parks in parks planning</p>	<p>Parks Department with STC support</p>

Develop a forest stewardship plan for each woodland area.	Check for tree protection and note any damage incurred by mowing	Create a basic stewardship plan for each property, derived from property inspections, and identify properties that would benefit from a more detailed plan	Create stewardship plans in place for larger park properties Include a grants strategy for each plan	Professional services
TREE PROTECTION. Protect existing trees and care for newly planted trees until they are established.				
Protect existing trees from mechanical damage associated with mowing and construction.	Place tree guards for young trees and establish tree protection zones during construction	Renew and manage the mowing contract in a manner that prevents mechanical damage to trees	Ongoing	Parks
TREE PLANTING and AFTERCARE. Establish processes and staff for young tree planting and aftercare.				
Budget for and sponsor projects to plant at least 100 trees per year in parks and township properties.	Maintain a prioritized list of planting sites and update annually Expand Tree Tenders group	Establish staff expertise to lead the planting program Expand the Friends of Parks groups	Ongoing. Milestone is to have an active friends group led by Tree Tenders in every township park	Parks/STC with Tree Tender support

Weed, mulch, structurally prune and protect newly planted trees until they are well established.	Establish work processes for the care of young trees on township properties	Increase trained staff capacity for tree care	Ongoing	Parks with STC support
Water newly planted trees until established.	Budget for expanded staffing for tree care. Begin with summer interns to water and protect newly planted trees	Ongoing	Ongoing	Parks/STC with volunteer support
NATURAL AREA STEWARDSHIP. Establish routine stewardship of all township-owned natural areas. Early pilots include the Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary (AWS) and the Boy Scout Game Preserve (BSGP).				
Redesign mowing schedules to reduce the extent and frequency, thereby expanding natural areas where possible.	Identify opportunities for reduced mowing, both in frequency and extent	Rework the mowing contract	Ongoing	Parks. Apply savings made in reduced mowing to increased management of invasives
Aggressively manage invasives that are putting existing canopy at risk.	Pilot a volunteer tenders' program in partnership with PERT	Establish in-house capacity for meadow management Grow volunteer involvement	Formalize an "adopt-a-natural area" volunteer program to leverage Township staff capacity	Parks/STC with volunteer support
Complete the forest restoration projects at the Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary and the Boy Scout Game Preserve.	AWS Phase 2 implementation	BSGP Phase 2 implementation	AWS Phase 3 grant application Capture learnings and incorporate into	Parks/STC with volunteer support

	Boy Scout Game Preserve (BSGP) Phase 2 plan		additional Parks plans and the master invasive plant management plan	
Create a natural areas stewardship plan for each township woodland, riparian or meadowland feature.	Gather and review all existing plans Outline opportunities and prioritize areas that would benefit from planning and associated grant support	Create a basic stewardship plan for each property, derived from property inspections, and identify properties that would benefit from a more detailed plan	Develop one detailed plan that addresses a major park with adjacent natural areas, eg, Alverthorpe Park, Manor Woods and adjacent private natural areas	Parks Professional Services Watershed organizations
INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT. Plan for and implement a systematic approach to managing invasive plants.				
Create and implement a plan for invasive plant management covering all Township properties of sufficient quality to support a PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) implementation grant.	Develop a master plan for invasive plant management	Apply for a DCNR implementation grant for invasives management	Implement the invasives management plan	Parks with STC support Professional Services

Strategy 3. Manage Private Trees and Natural Areas

We will educate, engage and support property owners in understanding and acting to preserve, protect, plant and care for trees that are appropriate for their properties.

RECOMMENDATION	2023-2025	2026-2028	2029-2031	RESPONSIBILITIES/ PARTNERS
HANDS-ON LEARNING and STEWARDSHIP. Establish the structure and experiences to engage residents in planting and caring for trees and natural areas. Place a priority on projects involving school groups, youth organizations and corporate days of giving.				
Offer regular service-learning projects involving tree planting and after-care.	Partner with the ASD Environmental Science Club to carry out monthly stewardship activities.	Expand to involve additional groups	Expand to involve additional groups	STC/ Parks Leverage by partnering with Briar Bush Nature Center, watershed associations and the Audubon Society
Grow our partnership with Philadelphia Horticultural Society (PHS) to recruit and train Tree Tenders who take leadership roles for hands on education and outreach.	Sponsor local Tree Tender training	Broaden the training structure	Grow local Tree Tenders group	STC/Parks/PHS/watershed associations
Formalize the Friends of Parks groups, with Tree Tender leadership and Township support for spring and fall “care for your trees” events.	Formalize support of existing friends’ groups (AWS, Hallowell, Grove, Roychester)	Pilot friends’ groups in all other parks	Group established for each park	Parks/STC/watershed associations
Pilot a reforestation volunteer training program in partnership with PERT and engage these	Pilot	Broader structure	Grow	STC/PERT/Parks

volunteers in piloting an “adopt a green space” program.				
HOMEOWNERS. Equip homeowners with the knowledge and resources to grow and sustain tree canopy on residential properties.				
Develop and implement a strategic communications plan for homeowners, including a tailored set of communications to educate and motivate planting and care of trees on private property.	Targeted communications on the value of trees and how to manage hazards	Support with regular annual tree giveaways and sales	Ongoing	Township Communications, STC/EAC/BBNC
Regularly offer free native tree giveaways to Abington residents	Give away 600 trees	Ongoing	Ongoing	STC
Provide resources to assist residents with trees.	Educational events and references	Ongoing	Ongoing	STC educator/ Communications
Regularly offer a spring native plant sale and a fall tree sale	Pilot	Routine	Ongoing	STC/EAC/BBNC/PHS
COMMUNITY SERVICE PROPERTY OWNERS. Encourage the planting and care of trees on community service and commercial properties through communications tailored to each set of stakeholders (e.g., public health, private schools, faith communities)				
Engage in dialog with community-service property owners about shared priorities and how the Township and the property owner can work together to achieve mutual success.	Communications and education plan	Pilot joint projects	Ongoing	Code/Communications/STC
COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES. Proactively reach out to commercial property owners to inform them of the value of trees to their businesses, customers and property values, and to the Township commitment to partnering with them in sustaining the urban tree canopy.				

<p>Systematically engage commercial property owners to effectively integrate trees and the built environment, particularly parking lots, and how to design planting sites and establish trees in manner that maximizes tree health and minimizes maintenance expense.</p>	<p>Build awareness through systematic communications and education</p>	<p>Pilot joint projects</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Communications/Economic Development/Planning</p>
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Strategy 4. Utilize Trees for Stormwater Management

We will prioritize, protect and enhance tree canopy within natural and riparian areas, thereby maximizing the interception and infiltration capacity that trees provide.

RECOMMENDATION	2023-2025	2026-2028	2029-2031	RESPONSIBILITIES/ PARTNERS
PLANNING. Ensure that trees are an integral part of Township stormwater management strategies and plans.				
Include STC review of and participation in all projects that have the potential of disrupting or enhancing woodlands and canopy coverage	Ongoing, with continuous improvement	Ongoing, with continuous improvement	Ongoing, with continuous improvement	Engineering, Code Enforcement and Construction Services with STC support
Ensure that trees are an integral part of the Township stormwater management, by establishing processes to effectively integrate appropriate tree species into stormwater management plans, design and implementation	Participate in Township Master Stormwater Plan development	Participate in Township Master Stormwater Plan implementation	Participate in Township Master Stormwater Plan implementation	Engineering with STC support
Stormwater BMPs (Best Management Practices). Aggressively preserve woodlands and the contribution they make to stormwater management and water quality.				
Advocate the preservation of woodlands as essential to stormwater management	Write up case study of AWS rain water catchment system	Awareness and advocacy	Ongoing	STC and Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) with support of Communications intern

<p>Identify BMPS utilizing natural stormwater management features, and promote/ incentivize their use over man-made solutions for stormwater management planning, design and operation</p>	<p>Review the PA BMP manual as it pertains to trees, identify impactful objectives, and introduce these into the township workflow</p>	<p>Awareness and advocacy</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Engineering with STC support</p>
<p>OUTREACH and EDUCATION. Create case studies and educational signage that teach and promote the use of natural BMPs for stormwater management.</p>				
<p>Educate the general public, property owners and developers on the roles that trees and wooded areas play in mitigating stormwater runoff</p>	<p>Write up case studies featuring existing installed best practices on Township properties</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>STC/Communications</p>
<p>Dedicate a portion of the Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary as a stormwater management demonstration and education area</p>	<p>Selected signage at Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary</p>	<p>Educational center at Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary</p>	<p>Based on experience with AWS, expand educational features to additional public spaces</p>	<p>STC with Township Support DCNR C2P2 grant</p>
<p>TREES for RIPARIAN AREAS. Motivate and support planting of trees in riparian areas.</p>				
<p>Provide incentives for private landowners with property adjacent to creeks to preserve and plant riparian forest buffers including appropriate riparian trees (eg, tree give-away)</p>	<p>Identify and prioritize riparian areas</p>	<p>Partner with watershed associations to develop restoration plans</p>	<p>Grants to support this</p>	<p>EAC and STC with Engineering, Parks and watershed association support</p>

<p>STREAMBANK RESTORATION. Identify, prioritize and systematically address stream-bank restoration to enhance water quality and mitigate stormwater runoff.</p>				
<p>Follow through with streambank restoration of the Sandy Run Creek</p>	<p>US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) design for Hallowell</p> <p>Implement USACE design for Roychester</p>	<p>Implement USACE design for Hallowell</p>	<p>Scope and apply for funding for additional tributaries, eg, within AWS</p>	<p>Engineering and Parks with STC support</p>

Strategy 5. Integrate Trees and the Built Environment

We will manage trees and canopy as an essential utility within the built environment, in a manner that maximizes tree health and safety and minimizes maintenance expense.

RECOMMENDATION	2023-2025	2026-2028	2029-2031	RESPONSIBILITIES/ PARTNERS
OUTREACH and EDUCATION. Provide education and training for residents and Township staff to effectively integrate trees with the built environment.				
Educate property owners on how to effectively integrate trees and the built environment	Provide detailed guidance on the Township website, and direct property owners to this through existing communications methods, eg, direct mail, new residents' package, calendar, etc.	Refine and prioritize audiences and how best to connect with them Tailor communications to the type of properties, including commercial, community service and residential		Communications/Code Enforcement/Professional services
Develop multi-departmental training on best practices for integrating trees with the built environment	Develop training priorities and initial training package Orient staff to website content	Deliver basic training for all township employees who make decisions that impact trees	Develop and deliver deeper training on selected topics	Professional services Include Parks, Planning, Engineering, Code, Construction Services, Public Works

DESIGN STANDARDS. Identify and routinely apply design standards that maximize the value of trees in the built environment.				
Create, maintain and apply a set of design standards that maximize the health and longevity of trees	Orient township staff to International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) BMPs Update and maintain guidelines for recommended and prohibited trees	Create a set of landscape design checklists to support efficient planning and review	Incorporate into Township processes	Consulting arborist/ Engineering/ Code Enforcement/ Construction Services
Plan and design new projects in a manner that prevents conflict between trees and the built environment, while simultaneously achieving the project and canopy objectives	Integrate STC review of and participation in all projects that have the potential for disruption or enhancement of woodlands or canopy coverage at the earliest point possible	Provide the Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board with tools to effectively review and make decisions regarding trees	Ongoing	STC/professional services/ township management
INSPECTION and MAINTENANCE. Identify and systematically resolve conflicts between trees and the built environment. Focus first on safety.				
Identify and systematically plan to address existing conflicts between trees and built infrastructure	Focus on eliminating conflict with sidewalks	Systematically replace trees that are not suitable for the site		Public works with STC support
Identify and address tree hazards through preventative maintenance	Review history of tree fall handled by Public Works and PECO,	Create a multi-year preventative maintenance plan		Public works with STC support in partnership

	and identify trends and key needs			with PECO and its contractors
DEMONSTRATION. Create a range of installations that demonstrate best practices for integrating trees with the built environment.				
Create green parking lots on Township property, as a demonstration of best practices	Write an article featuring the Alverthorpe Park parking lot rain garden	Select a Township parking lot and retrofit it with a set of green features - Crestmont Park community center	Select a Township parking lot and retrofit it with a set of green features - eg, AT Administration Old York Rd parking lot	Construction Services
Demonstrate “right-tree-right place” planting, which eliminates conflict between trees and sidewalks, and trees and overhead wires	Write an article featuring the installations at Hallowell Park, Crestmont Park, and Parkdale Avenue	Label trees and create a guide for the trees at Grove Park, to demonstrate optimum placement and growing conditions for a range of native canopy and ornamental trees	Support Friends of Parks in planting “Right Tree Right Place” examples in each park throughout the township	Consulting arborist with STC guidance
Demonstrate buffers	Develop plans to establish the tree buffer between the AT Public Works facility and Abington Senior High property.	Phase 1 planting	Phase 2 planting	Consulting Arborist, Construction Services

<p>STREET TREES and VILLAGE GREENS. Plan for development that maximized the value derived from trees in towns centers. Transition from the use of individual street trees to the use of village greens.</p>				
<p>Systematically maintain existing street trees located within Town Center districts.</p>	<p>Add 2020 inventory of Township-maintained street trees and village greens into the Township GIS system</p> <p>Determine schedule of tree maintenance, removal and replacement</p>	<p>Establish and implement a 5-year pruning cycle for mature trees in Town Center district</p> <p>Phase 1 street tree replacement</p>	<p>Phase 2 street tree replacement</p>	<p>Consulting arborist/ Professional services</p>
<p>Create a plan for future replacement of Township-managed street trees, moving towards village greens</p>	<p>Create a master plan to improve the street tree layout, diversity and planting site design to eliminate heat islands along major corridors</p>	<p>Pilot the first Village Green</p>	<p>Follow with additional greens per the plan</p>	<p>Planning with support from Code, STC and professional services</p>

Strategy 6. Establish and Enforce Code and Permits to Sustain Tree Canopy

We will revise the Township Code to proactively preserve, protect and replace trees, and support implementation with clear communications and effective processes.

RECOMMENDATION	2023-2025	2026-2028	2029-2031	RESPONSIBILITIES /PARTNERS
CODE REVISION. Address the shortcomings in the township code related to the preservation, protection and replacement of tree canopy.				
Enact code to protect, preserve and replace canopy	Conduct a final review and formally adopt the 2018 proposed revision to the Landscaping Article of the Zoning Ordinance	Ensure consistent provisions are incorporated into the SALDO rewrite.	Review the impacts of the new code provisions and incrementally improve as needed.	Commissioners Code Enforcement/STC/ Professional services
OUTREACH and EDUCATION. Support property owners in understanding an applying principles of tree preservation, protection and replacement.				
Assist property owners in understanding and applying the provisions of the code	Create a guidance document to assist property owners in creating tree plans as part of their land development proposals	Create a series of case studies to highlight practical application of the new code provisions	Ongoing assistance	Professional services/ Communications/Code Enforcement/STC
Tree selection	Update the list of recommended trees	Update as needed	Update as needed	STC/Communications

PERMITS AND ESCROW. Put in place the permit and escrow processes needed to enact and enforce the code revisions.				
Establish permit and escrow processes necessary to implement the code changes	Create the basic processes.	Incrementally improve	Ongoing	Legal review and professional services of an ordinance professional to support finalizing the revisions/Code/Communications

Strategy 7. Establish Structure and Resources Necessary to Implement This Plan

We will create a balanced and engaged team of Township staff, volunteers and partners, and support them with the training, resources and processes to implement this plan.

RECOMMENDATION	2023-2025	2026-2028	2029-2031	RESPONSIBILITIES/ PARTNERS
STEERING COMMITTEE. Provide oversight and champion the implementation of this plan				
Establish and support a steering committee responsible for implementing this plan.	Commission the steering committee (SC)	Ongoing- monitor progress & refine annual objectives	Ongoing- monitor progress & refine annual objectives	Steering Commission: Commissioner, Parks, Engineering, Code, Construction, Communication, Planning, STC, EAC, Economic Development Council
INTERNAL STAFFING and RESOURCES. Develop the internal staff, systems, and budget necessary to implement this plan.				
Parks	Parks Director provides primary leadership for this plan	Trained crews and contractors	Ongoing	Include one foreman each to be responsible for the recreational and the natural areas of Township Parks Reallocate mowing costs to fund management of natural areas Hire summer interns for tree care

<p>Communications</p>	<p>Create and maintain essential educational content to include in Township communications and on the Township website</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Support with a communications intern</p>
<p>Engineering, Construction and Code Enforcement</p>	<p>Maximize the utility of trees in designing and constructing stormwater mitigation features</p> <p>Maximize the preservation of plantable spaces suitable for trees</p> <p>Establish contractual arboriculture services to support design, review and inspection related to trees</p> <p>Administer permitting process as it relates to trees</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Establish an ongoing contract with a professional arborist to support code enforcement</p>
<p>Planning</p>	<p>Ensure the integrity of the Township plans and ordinances as they relate to sustaining the urban forest</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	

Public Works	Leaf recycling, compost, manpower and equipment to support this plan	Ongoing	Ongoing	
Finance	Support the grants program	Ongoing	Ongoing	
APPOINTED BOARDS. Engage all appointed boards who make or influence designs about trees in the implementation of this plan.				
STC AND EAC: Provide professional advisory services	Planning & Advisory Outreach, Engagement and Stewardship	Ongoing	Ongoing	See 2022 STC and EAC annual reports for details
Planning Commission and Economic Development Committee	Integrate this plan with operating procedures.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Commissioners, chairs of appointed boards
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES. Contract with professional services to support the implementation of this plan, particularly in the first three years. Based on this experience, budget for additional services.				
Ordinance Professional	Duties center on ordinance adoption	TBD	TBD	Township management and Code with STC support
Consulting Arborist	Duties center on implementing the ordinance revisions, including supporting processes	TBD	TBD	Township management with STC support
Consulting Naturalist	Duties center on support of parks inspections and	TBD	TBD	Township management with STC and EAC support

	creation of invasive management plans			
VOLUNTEER BASE. Grow the trained volunteer capacity in partnership with PHS, DCNR and the watershed groups.				
Tree Tenders	Formalize Tree Tenders group to support volunteer planting projects involving youth and community organizations, eg, ASD Environmental Science Club, scout projects, etc.	Experienced Tree Tenders in place to support half of parks groups	Experienced Tree Tenders in place to support the remaining half of parks groups	STC/PHS/Watersheds groups with Park support
Friends of Parks	Pilot processed with existing groups Prioritize the order in which groups are to be established	Establish groups in half of parks	Establish groups in remaining parks	STC/PHS/Watersheds groups with Park support
Forest Stewards	Engage a pilot group of volunteers in the PSU Extension “The Woods in Your Backyard” program and pilot with PERT	Grow the group and pilot an “adopt a woodland plot” program	A core group of PA Forest Stewards who collectively support all natural areas	STC in partnership with PA extension, PA Forest Stewards and PERT

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS. Strengthen and grow public and private partnerships to implement this plan				
Begin with existing partners, including MontCo, DCNR, PHS, Corporate sponsors, watershed organizations, land trusts, Audubon, PECO and PWD	Review existing partnership and systematically share this plan to identify areas of synergy	Leverage and grow our shared impact	Leverage and grow our shared impact	STC/EAC and township management
Grow as a regional partner	Begin with dialog among municipal stakeholders throughout the Delaware Valley	On going	Ongoing	STC/EAC and township management
GRANTS STRATEGY. Proactively identify funding partners to advance this plan.				
Create a strategic grants strategy to support implementation of this plan	Build upon existing grants strategy to address gaps	Ongoing	Ongoing	Steering Committee

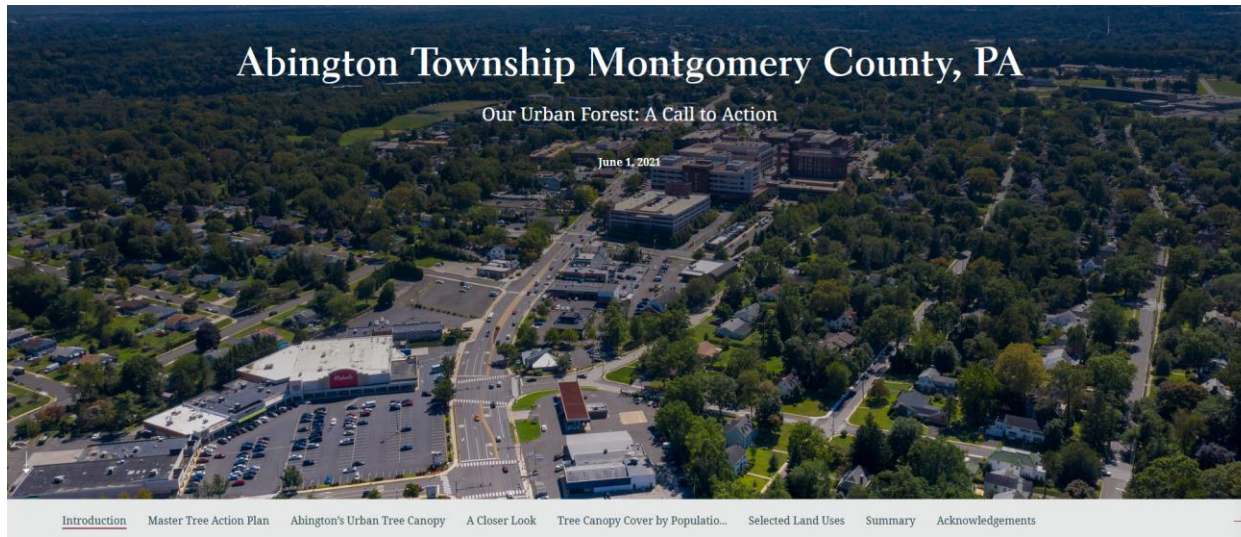
Appendices

Appendix I. List of Acronyms

ASD	Abington School District
AWS	Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary
AT	Abington Township
BBNC	Briar Bush Nature Center
BMP	best management practice
DCNR	Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
DCNR C2P2	DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program Grant
EAC	Environmental Advisory Council (of Abington Township)
GIS	geographic information systems
PERT	Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust
PHS	Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
PSU	Pennsylvania State University
PWD	Philadelphia Water Department
RSWC	regenerative stormwater catchment
SALDO	Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance
STC	Shade Tree Commission (of Abington Township)
TTF-WP	Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
UTC	urban tree canopy

Appendix II. Assessment of Abington's Urban Tree Canopy and Street Trees, 2020

"Our Urban Forest: A Call to Action", June 1, 2021 (<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ed7e547aeaed454ea5dd44c4b1be08c0>)



Appendix III. Indicators of the Sustainability of Abington's Urban Forest

Summary Table: Indicators of a Sustainable Urban Forest in Abington + Short Term Actions and Staffing

	Indicator	Performance Level	Comment	First steps (bold = highest priority)	Lead	Support
The Trees	Sustainable Urban Tree Canopy	Low	Declining	Endorse canopy goals derived from UTC assessment	BOC	Appointed Boards
	Equitable Distribution	Low	7-fold range	Demonstrate tree planting in low-canopy public spaces	STC	Parks
	Size/Age Distribution of Street Trees	Low	Narrow	Plan for replacement or transition to village greens	Planning	STC
	Condition of Public Trees - Streets, Parks	Moderate	Part. Assessed	Use street tree inventory data to guide tree risk management	Public Works	Arborist
	Condition of Public Trees - Natural Areas	Low	Not assessed	Establish routine inspection of young park trees & woodlands	Parks	Arborist, STC
	Condition of Trees on Private Property	Moderate	Basic UTC info	Conduct windshield surveys	Arborist	STC
	Species Diversity of Public Trees	Moderate	None>20%	Assess as part of parks inspections	Parks	STC
	Suitability (Right Tree Right Place)	Moderate	50-75%	Update list of recommended trees and selection criteria	STC	Communications
	Indicator	Performance Level	Comment	First steps (bold = highest priority)	Lead	Support
The Players	Neighborhood Action	Moderate	Some groups	Establish neighborhood-level tree goals	Ward Leadership	STC, Communications
	Large Private Landholder Involvement	Low	Unaware	Develop targeted communications to grow awareness	Communications	STC
	Green Industry Involvement	Good	PHS, DCNR	Share this plan and strengthen partnerships with watershed groups	STC	Communications
	Township Cooperation	Moderate	Informal team	Coordinate decisions regarding trees across all departments	STC Liaison	Township leadership, STC
	Funder Engagement	Moderate	Selected	Recommend long term partnership goals and funding priorities	STC	Parks
	Utility Engagement	Low	Coordination	Share this plan and identify key aspects of coordination	Public Works	STC
	Developer Engagement	Low	Awareness	Share this plan, invite participation, and identify synergies	Planning	STC
	Public Awareness	Moderate	Mixed	Grow awareness through targeted communications and dialog	Communications	STC
	Regional Collaboration	Moderate	Shared goals	Share this plan and identify synergies	STC	Planning
	Indicator	Performance Level	Comment	First steps (bold = highest priority)	Lead	Support
The Mgmt Approach	Tree Inventory	Moderate	Partial	Import existing inventories in to township GIS work order system	GIS	STC
	Canopy Assessment	Good	UTC 2017	Update the UTC assessment when new LIDAR data become available	Urban Forester	STC
	Management Plan	Moderate	In progress	Endorse and begin implementation of the MTP	BOC	Township Staff + Boards
	Risk Management Program	Moderate	Request-based	Train staff on basic tree risk assessment	Arborist	STC
	Maintenance of Publicly-Owned Trees	Low	Quality	Remove declining or hazardous trees identified in the inventory	Public Works	STC
	Maintenance of Natural Areas	Moderate	Partial	Recommend an approach to invasive plant management	STC	Parks
	Planting Program	Moderate	Limited scope	Staff for young tree care and establish a Township Tree Tenders group	Parks	STC
	Tree Protection Policy	Low	Inadequate	Adopt the revised Landscaping Chapter of the Zoning Ordinance	BOC, Code	Ordinance prof., STC
	City Staffing and Equipment	Low	No arborist	Hire a Parks Director, and establish a Consulting Arborist contract	Township Manager	STC
	Funding	Moderate	Underfunded	Develop a long term funding strategy, including budget, grants and donations	Township Manager	STC
	Disaster Preparedness & Response	Moderate	Reactive	Assess existing disaster plan as it pertains to tree risk and mitigation	Township Manager	STC
	Communications	Moderate	General	Create targeted communications plan to grow awareness	Communications	STC

Assessment of Urban Forestry- THE TREES

Indicators of a sustainable forest	Overall Objective of Industry Standard	Performance Levels			Abington Today	Next Steps
		Low	Moderate	Good		
Urban Tree Canopy	Achieve the desired tree canopy cover according to goals set for the entire city and neighborhoods. Alternatively, achieve 75% of the total canopy possible for the entire city in each neighborhood	Canopy is decreasing and/ or no canopy goals have been set	Canopy is not dropping, but not on a trajectory to achieve the established goal	Canopy goal is achieved, or well on the way to achievement	Lost 6% cover 2004-2017, equivalent to losing on average 1 out of 8 trees	Endorse canopy goals
Location of Canopy (equitable distribution)	Achieve low variation between tree canopy and equity factors citywide by neighborhoods. Ensure that the benefits of tree canopy are available to all, especially for this most affected by these benefits	Tree planting and public outreach and education is not determined by tree canopy or benefits	Tree planting and public outreach and education is focused on neighborhoods with low canopy cover	Tree planting and public outreach and education is confused in neighborhoods with low tree canopy and a high need for tree benefits	Have done some pilot, eg TD Green Streets, but not systematic	Demonstrate tree planting in low-canopy public spaces
Age of trees (size and age distribution)	Establish a diverse-aged population of public trees across the entire city and for each neighborhood. Ideal standard 0-8" DBH 40%, 9-17" DBH 30%, 18-24" DBH 20%, over 24" DBH 10%	Age distribution is not proportionately distributed across size classes at the city level	Age distribution is evenly distributed at city level, though unevenly distributed at the neighborhood level	Age distribution is generally aligned with the ideal standard diameter classes at the neighborhood level	Street trees nearly uniform in age	Plan for replacement or transition to village greens
Condition of publicly-owned trees	Possess a detailed understanding of tree conditioning potential risk of all intensives-managed, publicly-owned trees. This information is used to direct maintenance actions	No current information is available on tree condition or risk	Information from a partial or sample of inventory is used to assess tree condition and risk	Information from a current, GIS-based, 100% complete public tree inventory is used to indicate tree condition or risk	Street tree inventory indicates most trees are fair to poor condition	Use street tree inventory data to guide tree risk management
Condition of publicly-owned natural areas	Possess a detailed understanding of the ecological structure and function of all publicly-owned natural areas (such as woodlands, ravines, stream corridors) as well as usage patterns	No current information is available on tree condition or risk	Publicly-owned natural areas are identified in a sample-based "natural areas" survey or similar data	Information from a current, GIS-based survey is utilized to document ecological structure and function, as well as usage patterns	Natural area assessment has been done for AWS begun for BSGP, and lacking for other natural areas.	Establish routine inspections of young park trees and woodlands
Trees on private property	Possess solid understanding of the extent, location and general conditions of trees on private lands	No data is available on private trees	Current tree canopy assessment reflects basic information (location) of both public and private canopy combined	Detailed information available on private trees, e.g. bottom-up sample-based assessment of trees	UTC analysis combined with change analysis	Conduct windshield surveys
Diversity	Establish a genetically diverse population of publicly-owned trees across the entire city and for each neighborhood. Three populates should be comprised of no more than 30% of any family, 20% of any genus, or 10% of any species	Fewer than five species dominate the entire tree population city-wide	No species represents more than 20% of the entire tree population citywide	No species represents more than 10% of the entire tree population citywide	Does Acer exceed 20%? What does this suggest given the arrival of SLF?	Assess diversity as a part of parks and natural areas inspections

Indicators of a sustainable forest	Overall Objective of Industry Standard	Performance Levels			Abington Today	Next Steps
Suitability	Establish a tree population suitable to the urban environment and adapted to the overall region. Suitable species are gaged by exposure to imminent threats, considering the "Right Tree Right Place" concept and invasive species	Less than 50% of trees are considered suitable for the site	50-75% of trees are considered suitable for the site	More than 75% of trees are considered suitable for site	This is a guess. How would we figure this out?	Update. List of recommended trees and selection criteria

Assessment of Urban Forestry- THE PLAYERS

Indicators of a sustainable forest	Overall Objective of Industry Standard	Performance Levels			Abington Today	Next Steps
		Low	Moderate	Good		
Neighborhood action	Citizens understand, cooperate, and participate in urban forest management at the neighborhood level. Urban forestry is a neighborhood-scale issue	Little or no citizen involvement of neighborhood action	Some active groups are engaged in advancing urban forest activity, but with no unified set of goals or priorities	The majority of all neighborhoods are organized, connected, and working towards a unified set of goals and priorities	Strength- PHS Tree Tenders program. Turn out at selected tree planting events. Opportunity- Under the direction of the STC, Abington Tree Tenders group + Friends of Parks Groups. Offer routine volunteer opportunities, e.g. monthly.	Establish neighborhood-level tree goals
Large private and institutional landholder involvement	Large, private and institutional landholders embrace city-wide goals and objectives through targeted resource management plans	Large private landholders are unaware of issues and potential influence of the urban forest. No large private land management plans are currently in place	Educational materials and advice are available to large private landholders. Few large private landholders or institutions have management plans in place	Clear and concise goals are established for large private land holders through direct education and assistance programs. Key landholders and institutions have management plans in place.	Opportunity- ASD, Jefferson Hospital, PSU, Manor, etc. Who are Abington's largest private landholders?	Develop targeted communications to grow awareness
Green industry involvement	The green industry works together to advance citywide urban forest goals and objectives. The city and its partners capitalize on local green industry expertise or innovation	Little or no involvement from green industry leaders to advance local urban forestry goals	Some partnerships are in place to advance local urban forestry goals, but more often for the short term	Long-term committed partnerships are working to advance local urban forestry goals.	Solid partnerships with PHS, State Extension and DCNR. Expand to include others- PECO? CSX? Landscapers? Tree Companies?	Share this plan and strengthen partnerships with watershed groups
City department and agency cooperation	All city departments and agencies cooperate to advance city-wide urban forestry goals and objectives	Conflicting goals and/or actions among city departments and agencies	Informal teams among departments and agencies are communicating and implementing common goals on a project-specific basis	Common goals and collaboration across all departments and agencies. City policy and actions are implemented by formal interdepartmental and interagency working teams on all city projects	Active participation by Parks, Public Works, Engineering and Code Enforcement. STC now formally participates in LD applications.	Coordinate decision regarding trees across all departments
Funder engagement	Local funders are engaged and invested in urban forestry initiatives. Funding is adequate to implement city-wide urban forest management plan.	Little or no funders are engaged in urban forestry initiatives	Funders are engaged in urban forestry initiatives at minimal levels for short-term projects.	Multiple funders are fully engaged and active in urban forestry initiatives for short-term projects and long-term goals	Active support and participation - DCNR, Inframark, LLC, and TD Bank. STC strength in grant writing and administration.	Recommend long term partnership goals and funding priorities
Utility engagement	All utilities are aware of and vested in the urban forest and cooperate to advance city-wide urban forest goals and objectives	Utilities and city agencies act independently of urban forest efforts. No coordination exists.	Utilities and city agencies have engaged in dialog about urban forestry efforts with respect to capital improvement and infrastructure projects	Utilities, city agencies and other stakeholders integrate and collaborate on all urban forestry efforts, including planning, site work and outreach/ education	PECO, Asplundh relationships with Township.	Share this plan and identify key aspects of coordination

Indicators of a sustainable forest	Overall Objective of Industry Standard	Performance Levels			Abington Today	Next Steps
		Low	Moderate	Good		
Developer engagement	The development community is aware of and vested in the urban forest and cooperates to advance citywide urban forest goals and objectives	Little or no cooperation from developers in (or awareness of) municipality-wide urban forest goals and objectives	Some cooperation from developers and general awareness and acceptance of municipality-wide goals and objectives	Specific collaborative arrangements across development community in support of municipality -wide goals and objectives	Currently enter into developer discussion as part of LD reviews. Proposal for Economic Development Corporation.	Share this plan, invite participation an identify synergies,
Public Awareness	The general public understands the benefits of trees and advocates for the role and importance of urban forests	Trees are generally seen as a nuisance, and the a drain on city budgets and personal paychecks	Trees are generally recognized as important and beneficial	Trees are seen as valuable infrastructure and vital to the community's well being. The urban forest is recognized for the unique environmental, economic and social services it provides in the community	A significant portion of the population sees trees as a nuisance.	Grow awareness through targeted communications and dialog
Regional Collaboration	Neighboring communities and regional groups are actively cooperating and interacting to advance the region's stake in the city's urban forest	Little or no interaction between neighboring communities and regional groups	Neighboring communities and regional groups share similar goals and policy vehicles related to trees and urban forest	Regional urban forestry planning, coordination and management is widespread	Strength- PHS, watershed groups Audubon, stormwater coordinator with neighboring communities	Share this plan, invite participation and identify synergies,

Assessment of Urban Forestry- THE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

Indicators of a sustainable forest	Overall Objective of Industry Standard	Performance Levels			Abington Today	Next Steps
		Low	Moderate	Good		
Tree Inventory	Comprehensive, GIS-based, current inventory of all intensively-managed public trees to guide management, with mechanisms in place to keep data current and available for use. Data allows for analysis of age-distribution, condition, risk, diversity, suitability	No inventory or out-of-date inventory of publicly owned trees	Partial or sample-based inventory of publicly-owned trees. Inconsistently updated	Complete, GIS-based inventory of publicly-owned trees, updated on a regular, systematic basis	Street tree inventory updated 2020	Import existing inventories into Township GIS work order system
Canopy Assessment	Accurate, high resolution, and recent assessment of existing and potential city-wide tree canopy cover that is regularly updated and available for use across various departments, agencies and disciplines	No tree canopy assessment	Sample-based canopy cover assessment, or dated (over 10 years old) , high resolution canopy assessment	High-resolution tree canopy assessment using aerial photographs or satellite imagery	On track to complete in 2020.	Update UTC assessment when the next LIDAR data become available.
Management plan	Existence and buy-in of a comprehensive urban forest management plan to achieve city-wide goals. Re-evaluation is conducted every 5 to 10 years	No urban forest management plan exists	A plan for the publicly-owned forest resource exists but is limited in scope, acceptance and implementation	A comprehensive plan for the publicly owned forest resource exists and is accepted and implemented	Actively developing a master tree plan.	Endorse and begin implementation of the MTP

Indicators of a sustainable forest	Overall Objective of Industry Standard	Performance Levels			Abington Today	Next Steps
Risk management plan	All publicly-owned plans are managed for maximum public safety by way of maintaining a city-wide inventory	Request-based, reactive system. The condition of publicly-owned trees is unknown	There is some degree of risk abatement thanks to knowledge of publicly-owned trees, though generally still managed as a request-based reactive system	There is a complete tree inventory with risk assessment data and a risk abatement program in effect, Hazards are eliminated within a set time period depending on the level of risk	Largely a request-based system.	Train staff on basic tree risk assessment
Maintenance of publicly-owned trees (trees managed extensively)	All intensively-managed, publicly-owned trees are well maintained for optimal health and condition in order to extend longevity and maximize benefits. A reasonable cyclical pruning program is in place, generally targeting 5 to 7 year cycles. The maintenance program is outline in the management plan.	Request-based, reactive system. No systematic pruning program is in place for publicly-owned trees.	All publicly-owned trees are systematically maintained, but pruning cycle is inadequate	All publicly-owned trees are proactively and systematically maintained and adequately pruned on a cyclical basis	Street trees maintenance is inadequate-improper pruning and mulching.	Remove declining or hazardous trees identified in the inventory
Maintenance of publicly-owned natural areas (trees managed extensively)	The ecological structure and function of all publicly-owned natural areas are protected and enhanced while accommodating public use where appropriate	No natural areas management plans are in effect	Only reactive management efforts to facilitate public use (risk abatement)	Management plans are in place for each publicly-owned management area focused on managing ecological structure and function and facilitating public use	Plans in place for AWS and putting in place for BS Preserve, Many STC planting sites in parklands and riparian areas	Recommend an approach to invasive plant management

Indicators of a sustainable forest	Overall Objective of Industry Standard	Performance Levels			Abington Today	Next Steps
Planting program	Comprehensive plan and effective tree planting and establishment program is driven by canopy cover goals, equity considerations, another priorities according to the plan. Tree planting and establishment is outlined in the management plan.	Tree establishment is ad hoc	Tree establishment is consistently funded and occurs an annual basis	Tree establishment is directed by needs derived from a tree inventory and other community plans and is sufficient in meting canopy cove objectives	Annual funding, but lower than needed to sustain canopy.	Staff for young tree care and establish a Township Tree Tenders group
Tree protection policy	Comprehensive and regularly updated tree protection ordinance with enforcement ability is based on community goals. The benefits derived from trees on public and private property are ensured by the enforcement of existing policies	No tree protection policy	Policies are in place to protect trees, but he policies are not well enforced of ineffective	Protection policies ensure the safety of treason public and private land. The policies are enforced and supported by significant deterrents and shared ownership of city goals.	Policy is inadequate.	Adopt the revised Landscaping chapter of the Zoning Ordinance
City staffing and equipment	Adequate staff and access to the equipment and vehicles to implement the management plan. A high level urban forester or planning professional, strong operations staff, and solid certified arborist technicians	Insufficient staffing levels, insufficiently trained staff, and/or inadequate equipment and vehicle availability	Certified arborists and professional urban foresters on staff have some professional development but are lacking adequate staff levels or adequate equipment	Multi-disciplinary team with the urban forestry unit, inclusion and urban forestry professional, operations manager, and arborist technicians. Vehicles and equipment are sufficient to complete required work	Lacking arborist skills and oversight.	Hire a Parks Director, and establish a Consulting Arborist contract

Indicators of a sustainable forest	Overall Objective of Industry Standard	Performance Levels			Abington Today	Next Steps
Funding	Appropriate funding in place to fully implement both proactive and reactive needs based on a comprehensive urban forest management plan	Funding comes from the public sector only, and covers only reactive work	Funding levels (public and private) generally cover mostly reactive work. Low levels of risk management and planning in place	Dynamic, active funding from engaged private partners and adequate public funding are used to proactively manage and expand the future forest	Strong base of support from state and regional funders.	Develop a long term funding strategy, including budget, grants and donations
Disaster preparedness and response	A disaster management plan is in place related to the city's urban forest. The plan includes staff roles, contracts, response priorities, debris management and a crisis communication plan. Staff are regularly trained and/or updated	No disaster response plan is in place	A disaster plan is in place but pieces are missing and staff are not regularly trained or updated	A robust disaster management plan is in place, regularly updated and staff are fully trained on roles and processes	Need to assess current state. Anticipate we will find that the disaster plan as it pertains to trees is reactive in nature.	Assess the existing disaster plan as it pertains to tree risk and mitigation
Communication	Effective avenues of two-way communication exist between the city departments and between city and its citizens. Messaging is consistent and coordinated, when feasible	No avenues are in place. City departments and public determine on an ad-hoc basis the best messages and avenues to communicate	Avenues are in place, but used sporadically and without coordination or only on a one-way basis	Avenues are in place for two-way communication, are all used with targeted, coordinated messages.	Excellent avenues are in place and continue to improve. Targeted messaging exists for SLF and selected projects.	Create a targeted communications plan to grow awareness

Appendix IV. Proposed Revisions to Township Zoning Ordinance

A. Article II, Definitions

B. Article XXIV, Landscaping

Zoning Ordinance Article II: Definitions

[proposed new definitions in red]

SECTION 200. LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION: Unless a contrary intention clearly appears, the following words and phrases shall have for the purposes of this Ordinance, the meanings given in the following definitions.

A. For the purpose of this Ordinance, words and terms used herein shall be interpreted as follows:

1. Words used in the present tense include the future.
2. Words used in the singular include the plural, and those used in the plural include the singular.
3. Reference made in the masculine includes the feminine.
4. The word "person" includes an individual, association, corporation, partnership, or other legal entity.
5. The word "lot" includes the word "plot", "parcel", "premises." or "site."
6. The term "shall" and "will" are mandatory and the terms "may" "should" and "is encouraged" are optional.
7. The words "used" and "occupied" as applied to any land or structure shall be construed to include the words "intended, arranged, or designed to be occupied or used."
8. The phrase "board" or "governing body", unless otherwise specified, shall mean the Board of Commissioners of Abington Township.
9. The words "Township" or "township" means the Township of Abington. The terms "Township of Abington" and "Abington Township" may be used interchangeably.
10. The phrase "planning commission" and "local planning commission" mean the Abington Township Planning Commission.
11. The phrase "Zoning Hearing Board" means the Zoning Hearing Board of Abington Township.

B. Any word or term not defined herein shall be used within the meaning of standard usage.

SECTION 201. SPECIFIC DEFINITIONS: For definitions of land use types, see “Article XXI: Use Regulations”.

Abut: As it pertains to lots, those that share a common lot line. As it pertains to zoning districts, those that share a common zoning line.

Access Drive: A paved surface, other than a street, which provides pedestrian or vehicular access from a street or private road to a lot or parking area, including the area providing for the movement of vehicles around and through designated parking lots.

A. Main Access Drive – An access drive which provides vehicular and pedestrian access from a street to uses internal to a lot (e.g., buildings, parking) or to a secondary access drive. A main access drive does not include parking aisles.

B. Secondary Access Drive – An access drive providing vehicular and pedestrian access from the main access drive to buildings and/or parking which does not intersect a street. A secondary access drive does not include parking aisles.

Access Point, Vehicular: The curb cut or other point at which an Access Drive meets an external street from which it takes access. A Vehicular Access Point may provide for ingress and egress, together or separately, so that a separate entrance and exit shall be considered one Vehicular Access Point.

Accessory Building or Structure: A building or structure that is separate and subordinate, and the use of which is clearly and customarily incidental to that of the principal structure and which is located on the same lot as the principal structure.

Accessory Use: A use subordinate to the principal use of a lot or building.

Adjacent: see Abut.

Adult Uses: see definitions within Article XXIX: Adult Uses.

Agriculture: The cultivating of the soil, and the raising and harvesting of the products of the soil, including, but not by the way of limitation, nursery, nursery sales yards, horticulture and forestry, and animal husbandry.

Alley: A minor way which may or may not be legally dedicated and is used primarily for vehicular service access to the rear or side of properties abutting a street. Frontage on an alley shall not be considered street frontage.

Alteration: An alteration of a structure or premises includes the following changes:

- A. A change in use of the structure from one use classification to another.
- B. The addition of any zoning use to the structure.
- C. Changes to the interior layout or partitions of a structure to modify or improve the utility of the premises.
- D. Changes or modifications of the structural members of any building or structure.
- E. Incidental changes to nonstructural parts of a building or structure which relate to a change in use of the building.
- F. Changes in occupancy, or alteration of conditions imposed upon the occupancy of a building or premise.

ANSI Standard: The American National Standard Institute. Specific to Article XXIV-Landscaping and the relevant provisions of the Township SALDO, the reference documents shall be ANSI Z60.1 (The American Standard for Nursery Stock) and ANSI A300 (the industry standard on tree care practices), and subsequently as amended thereof.

Apartment: See Article XXI: Use Regulations for definitions of specific uses.

Applicant: The land owner of record or their authorized representative; the term includes "developer."

Approved Preserved Tree: Any tree that is inside the limit of disturbance and is to be properly protected and not destroyed or injured during construction as required by the Ordinance and as approved by the Shade Tree Commission Designee.

Basement: A story either partially or fully below surrounding grade. It shall be counted into the floor area of a building if it is finished or used for other than storage purposes.

Block: A tract of land bounded by streets and public park areas (and/or railroad rights-of-way, excluding siding and spurs).

Boarder: A person occupying any room or group of rooms forming a single, habitable unit, used or intended to be used for living and sleeping but not for cooking or eating purposes, and paying compensation for lodging or board by prearrangement for a week or more at a time to the owner or operator. Any person occupying such rooms under the same terms for less than one week shall be classified for purposes of this Ordinance as a guest of a commercial lodging establishment.

Boundary Tree: A tree on an adjacent property whose tree protection zone intrudes across the property line of the property under consideration.

Buffer Area: A strip of pervious land between a property line and a structure on the lot, the width of which is regulated under this Ordinance, and on which is placed plantings or screening of sufficient height and density to visually protect and shield an abutting property or zoning district from the use established on the lot. A buffer yard may not be utilized for other purposes unless specifically authorized herein. Unless otherwise specified, a buffer area may be included as part of the required setbacks and yard areas.

Build-to-Line: Where applicable, a line, measured from and parallel to the right-of-way, on which at least 50% of the front façade of the principal building on the lot is required to be built. Where required, a build-to-line replaces the front yard setback. See also "Build-to-Zone".

Build-to-Zone: Where applicable, the area lying between and including the minimum and maximum build-to lines (see Figure 2.2: Build-to-Zone).

Buildable Area (LP—Land Preservation District Development Sites): That portion of a development site remaining after subtracting the total land preservation area and other restricted lands from the gross site area.

Building: Any structure or portion thereof rising above grade level, and having a roof supported by columns or walls, intended for the shelter, storage, or enclosure of persons, animals, or property. Detached buildings are those separated from the principal use.

Building Coverage: The total amount of land area covered by the footprints of all principal

and accessory buildings and structures on a lot. This term is described as a ratio of total covered land area to the total lot area. When a maximum building coverage is listed as a district or use requirement, the maximum building coverage is not guaranteed to the developer. The need for parking or other factors may preclude achievement of maximum building coverage.

Building Envelope: That portion of a lot, outlined by and contained within required district yard setback lines, wherein principal buildings may be constructed, provided other development criteria contained in this Ordinance are satisfied. Accessory buildings may have different requirements.

Building Footprint: The total land area covered by a building or structure at-grade.

Building Height: The vertical distance from grade plane to the average height of the highest

Building, Principal: A building in which the primary use of the lot is conducted.

Building Setback Line: The inner edge of the required yard for a given property line defining a lot or parcel, beyond which a principal building may not encroach.

Caliper: A measure of a nursery stock trunk size, measured in diameter. For four-inch diameter stock or smaller, the measure is taken at six inches above the root ball. For stock above four inches, the measurement is taken at 12 inches above the root ball. Not to be confused with DBH (diameter measured at 4.5' above natural ground level), which is used as a measurement of established trees.

Canopy Tree: Large, shade trees, typically with deciduous foliage (bare in winter), and generally reaching at least 40 feet in height at maturity.

Canopy: The upper and outermost part of a tree created by the tree's crown and shall mean, in the case of contiguous trees, the upper and outermost parts of the trees' crowns.

Cartway: The portion of a street or right-of-way which is paved and intended for vehicular use.

Clear Cutting: The indiscriminate and broad removal of the lesser of 50% of the parcel's existing number of trees greater than 6" DBH or 50% of the parcel's tree canopy, typically with the intention of preparing real property for nonagricultural development purposes. This definition shall not include the selective removal of nonnative tree and shrub species when the soil is left relatively undisturbed; the removal of dead or significantly diseased trees; and those trees which pose an imminent danger to the public health, safety or welfare.

Commemorative Shade Tree Fund: A fund comprised of contributions from interested persons and other entities, including payments in lieu of planting or replanting requirements and fines levied, for the purpose of maintaining the wooded character of the streets and lands within the Township.

Common Open Space: See "Open Space, Common".

Condominium: An estate in real property governed by the Pennsylvania Uniform Condominium Act wherein the occupant-owner of each unit of real property holds fee simple title to that unit and a specified amount of indivisible parts of the structure or land known as common elements.

Condominium, Multifamily: A multifamily dwelling unit that fits the definition of "condominium", above.

Cornice: Any horizontal decorative, projecting, molding that crowns a building (see Figure 2.3).

Crown: The upper mass or head of a tree created by its branches and leaves.

Cul-De-Sac: A street intersecting with another street at one end, and terminating in a vehicular turnaround at the other end.

DBH (or dbh): Diameter at breast height; a measure of trunk diameter in inches, taken at 4.5 feet above the natural ground line. The measured section of the tree should be free of branches and representative of the typical age of the tree species. DBH measurement is applied to existing trees.

DCNR: Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Density: Dwelling units per developable acre.

Developable Acreage (a.k.a., "Developable Land"): Land remaining at a development site after excluding existing easements; rights-of-way; areas consisting of floodplain and wetlands which are protected from development by federal, state, or local land regulations; and steep slope area (including those steep slope areas for which a grant of special exception has been denied by the Township Zoning Hearing Board).

Developer/Applicant: Any person seeking approval under this Ordinance for any form of development or use.

Development: Any man-made change to improve, unimprove, or alter real estate, including but not limited to, erecting permanent buildings or other structures, the placement of mobile homes or temporary structures, the installation of streets, rights-of-way, pervious and impervious paving, utilities, excavating, filling, grading, mining, drilling, or blasting of land.

District, Zoning: A portion of the Township as designated on the Township Zoning Map inclusive of streets, alleys and private or public rights-of-way, within which certain uses of land, lots, buildings and structures are either not permitted, or are permitted with certain specified criteria.

Dripline: An imaginary line on the surface and subsurface of the ground delineated by the outer limits of the branches of a tree and measured plumb from the branches to the ground. When the outer limits of the branches are indistinct or otherwise unclear, the drip line shall be presumed to be located one and one-half feet from the center of the trunk of a tree for each inch of the trunk DBH. In the case of trees with multiple trunks, the drip line of each trunk shall be measured separately.

Driveway: A strip of land intended for use as a means of vehicular and pedestrian access from a public street to a lot or lots.

Duplex: A structure having two residential units—one lying above the other.

Dwelling Unit: One or more connected rooms forming a single habitable unit containing cooking, living, sanitary, and sleeping facilities, which are used or intended for use by one or more persons living together and maintaining a common household as one single family unit. Each dwelling unit must be accessible from the outdoors either directly or through an entrance hall shared with other dwelling units. A dwelling unit may contain only one kitchen facility.

Easement: A right-of-way or other right, granted for the limited and specified use of private land for private, common, or public use, which is recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds.

Eaves: The overhanging lowest edge of a roof.

Employee: An individual working for another person, business, partnership, corporation or other legal entity for compensation either full or part time. The total number of employees working at a given business, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity is the number of employees during the largest shift operation of the facility.

Enforcement Officer/Official: The Zoning or Code Official appointed by the Township to enforce this Ordinance within the jurisdiction of the Township.

Evergreen Tree: A woody plant capable of reaching a minimum mature height of 20 feet with foliage persistent for more than one full year, resulting in a year-round (evergreen) foliage screening capacity.

Expansion: A change in use or alteration of a building, structure, lot or premises, which results in an increase in use, size, leasable floor area, or function from the previous use provided.

FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Façade: The vertical exterior wall or face of a building, measured from grade level up to the roof line, eave, or to the lowest level of a cornice or parapet. Unless specified otherwise, "façade" shall refer to the front façade.

Façade, Front: The façade(s) of a building facing a street, public gathering place, or public access area. The front façade is also sometimes referred to simply as "the façade".

Family: One or more persons related by blood, marriage or adoption, or a group of not more than five persons who need not be related, and who are living together in a single dwelling and maintaining a common household with single cooking facilities. As a special exception, the Zoning Hearing Board may interpret the term "family" to include the following:

- A. Any number of individuals living together, when all individuals are related by blood, marriage or legal adoption, as two nonprofit housekeeping units and doing separate cooking on the premises, provided that one of the housekeeping units shall contain not more than two members, at least one of whom shall be 60 years of age or older, and provided further that the owner of the property executes an agreement with the township which shall be recorded with the County Recorder of Deeds, which agreement provides for the immediate removal of separate cooking facilities at such time as they are no longer being utilized by the person for whom they were originally installed. All provisions of other Township ordinances, codes and regulations, specifically as they pertain to multifamily dwellings, must be met.

Floodplain: The area which would be inundated by storm water runoff equivalent to that which would occur with a rainfall of 100-year frequency, as indicated on the Flood Insurance Study for Abington Township.

Floodway: The channel of a river or other watercourse, and the adjacent land areas required to carry and discharge the flood of the 100-year magnitude without causing more than a one-foot rise in the flood heights at any point.

Floor Area (Gross): The sum of the areas of all horizontal floors and mezzanines of a building as measured from the outside face of the exterior walls, or from the centerline of walls separating two buildings. Floor area includes attics, balconies, basements, penthouses, and porches, if intended for human occupancy.

Flowering/Ornamental Tree: A deciduous tree, single or multistem, with a minimum mature height of 15 feet. Single-stem variety must be a minimum of two-inch caliper. Multistem variety must have no less than three stems with a minimum caliper of 0.75 inch per stem.

Frontage: The length of any one property line of a lot which abuts a street or public right-of-way.

Garage (Private): A building for the private use of the owner or occupant of a principal building situated on the same lot as that building, used for household storage or vehicle parking.

Grade: The slope of the land or public improvement, specified in percent (%). It is measured as rise over run, measured over a minimum ten foot (10') run.

Green Area: The portion of a lot's surface covered with turf or other vegetation. Green area shall not include pervious or impervious paving, and shall be covered with vegetation on at least 80% of its surface.

Gross Leasable Floor Area (GLFA): The sum of all floor areas of a building capable of being used or devoted to a principal or accessory use of an occupant or tenant, minus floor areas of the building devoted to:

- A. Basement and crawl space utilized strictly as storage use.
- B. Mechanical and building utility spaces such as elevator shafts, water closets, and building equipment rooms.
- C. Permanent common hallways and stairways.
- D. Permanent, aesthetic lobbies used for architectural enhancement or display, and not used for office or seating.
- E. Permanent bathroom facilities for use by common tenants or the general public utilizing the building.
- F. Mezzanines devoted exclusively for storage use.
- G. Garage area, utilized in the required parking space count for the principal building use, and not devoted to storage use.
- H. Design elements for handicapped accessibility.

Ground Cover: Desirable low-growing perennial plants, other than turf, often supplemented with trees and shrubs, planted in a manner so as to provide continuous plant cover of the ground surface. Non-plant ground cover may also include bark or wood chips, gravel, and stone, provided they are maintained as a continuous pervious cover.

Hazard Tree: A tree with uncorrectable defects severe enough to pose present danger to people or buildings under normal conditions, as determined by the Township or Shade Tree Commission Designee.

HVAC: Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning.

Hedgerow: A narrow linear vegetated area with a mix of woody trees and shrubs. Hedgerows may be formed along farm fields and pastures. Hedgerows may be considered as a desirable visual characteristic of a rural landscape, warranting preservation during the subdivision or land development process.

Height: for that of buildings, see Building Height.

Heritage Tree: A tree located on public or private property which is specifically identified and considered worthy of preservation by the Township because of the species, size, rarity or historical importance; or a tree having a DBH greater than 30 inches; or a tree having an age greater than 75 years.

Historic Structures: Any area, building or other structure which has been designated by statute, ordinance or departmental or executive declaration of any governmental body as possessing historic significance.

Homeowners Association: A legally constituted, private, nonprofit corporation created for the purpose of owning, operating, and maintaining defined common property.

ICC: International Construction Code.

Impervious Surface: Surfaces that do not absorb storm water. All buildings, parking areas, driveways, roads, sidewalks, swimming pools, and any areas in concrete or asphalt shall be considered impervious surfaces within this definition. In addition, other surfaces determined by the Township Engineer to fall within the scope of this definition shall be considered impervious.

Improvements: Any alteration to a lot, parcel, building, or structure.

Invasive Species: Any plant that appears in the most recent invasive plants lists published by the Delaware Native Species Commission or the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR).

Land Balancing: Grading of land which results in no net change to the amount of soil on the site.

Land Development: The physical improvement of land for any purpose involving a single nonresidential use or two or more residential uses on a lot.

Landscaping: Specified plantings and vegetation in quantities as described in this Ordinance, which is required for a certain use of land, or as buffer, or open space areas.

Limit of Disturbance (LOD): Boundary line to be shown on a plan delineating the area outside of which no activity of any sort relating to transplanting, demolition, grading, construction, drainage, storage or any other project activities is permitted. The LOD also includes areas of encroachment or entry/egress by construction equipment or vehicles.

Loading Berth: An area abutting the building specifically designed for the loading and unloading of trucks and vehicles, and which has convenient access to a storage location within the building; such access being furnished by an elevated floor, a recessed vehicle parking area, a ramp, or other facility.

Local Road: A road defined as such by the Abington Township Comprehensive Plan.

Lot: A parcel, tract or portion thereof, or area of land, described by metes and bounds and established by a plat, or otherwise permitted by law, the description of which has been

recorded in the Office of Recorder of Deeds, by plat or deed. The following are specific types of lots:

A. Lot, Corner – A lot at the junction of and abutting on two (2) or more intersecting streets, where the interior angle is less than one hundred 135° degrees, and the radius of the street is less than 100’.

B. Lot, Double Frontage – A lot having two front yards each abutting on a different public street, and other than a corner lot.

C. Lot, Interior – Any lot which is not a corner lot.

D. Lot, Flag – A lot with access provided to the bulk of the lot by means of a narrow strip of land which has less street frontage than is normally required. The pole or panhandle is an access corridor to a lot area located behind lots with normal street frontage.

Lot Area: The area contained within the property lines of a lot as shown on a subdivision or land development plan, excluding space within an existing or future right-of-way, but including the area of any easement.

Lot Depth: The average distance between the front and rear lot lines.

Lot Line: The lines bounding a lot as defined in §2601.M. Yard Requirements.

Lot Width: The distance measured between lot lines, other than the front and rear lot lines, at the front building setback, build-to line, or portion of the build-to-zone closest to the street.

Mobile Home: A transportable, single-family dwelling intended for permanent occupancy; contained in one unit or in two or more units designed to be joined into one integral unit, capable of again being separated for repeated towing; which arrives at a site complete and ready for occupancy, except for minor and incidental unpacking and assembly operations; and constructed so that it may be used without permanent foundation.

Modular Dwelling Unit: A factory-built, single-family dwelling unit that is manufactured under the authority of the National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act, and approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs, which is transportable in one or more sections for delivery to a site, but which is mounted upon a permanent foundation, without wheels or axles attached to the structure.

Municipalities Planning Code (MPC): Pennsylvania Act 247 of 1968, latest revision of which is Act 170 of 1988, which is the enabling legislation governing municipal land development, planning, subdivision, and zoning ordinance regulations.

Native Plants: A plant species indigenous to the Northeastern United States that occurs naturally in a particular region, state, ecosystem, and habitat without direct or indirect human actions.

Nonconforming: A building, lot, structure, sign or use, which lawfully existed prior to the adoption, revision or amendment of this Ordinance, but does not comply with zoning use or district regulations by reason of adoption, revision, or amendment of this Ordinance.

Treatment of non-conforming buildings, lots, and uses is specifically addressed within this ordinance. See Article XIX: Nonconforming Uses, Structures, Lots, and Signs.

Occupancy Certificate: A use and occupancy permit, applied for by the occupant of a

building, structure or use, and issued under authority and standards of this Ordinance, which establishes the legal right to occupy and use a premises, and which sets forth any special conditions for the specified use and occupancy.

Occupant: The legal occupant of a building, premises, structure, or use, issued an occupancy permit for such right to occupy and use, or exempt from the need to do so by governmental or legal privileged status.

Open Space: Shall include a parcel or parcels of land, or an area of water, or a combination of land and water, within a development site, interconnected and designed for the use and enjoyment of the residents of a development and/or the Township, not including streets, off-street parking area, required yards, and areas set aside for public facilities, except as may be approved by the Board of Commissioners. Open space may be set aside in one, or a combination of the following ways:

A. Open Space, Dedicated: An open space area or areas offered to and accepted by the Board of Commissioners for use by all residents of Abington Township.

B. Open Space, Common: A parcel or parcels of land and/or an area of water within a development site designed and intended for the use or enjoyment of residents of the development, integrated and distributed for maximum benefit of the community, or for the protection of natural or historic resources, and restricted in use by declaration in deed. Common open space shall not include street rights-of-way, off-street parking areas, or required yard areas.

C. Open Space, Public: An open space area or areas available for use by the general public.

D. Open Space in Land Preservation District: That portion of a tract of open space land that is permanently deed restricted from further development opportunities, and reserved for the preservation of natural resource features, historic features, and/or natural scenic views.

For open space regulations, see [TBD] Open Space Standards of the SALDO.

Openings-to-Walls Ratio: A measurement, expressed as a percentage (%) found by dividing A by B, where A = the area of a house comprised of openings such as doors and windows, and B = the total vertical area comprising the outer walls of a house (does not include sloped or horizontal surfaces).

Overlay: A district or set of standards which is applied for the intention and purpose expressed in this Ordinance, which either supersedes or acts in conjunction with the established underlying zoning district, in order to achieve the desired result. Several overlay standards may be applied to any given parcel or lot as may be applicable according to the standards established herein.

Owner: The individual, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity, who is the owner of record as described in the Office of Recorder of Deeds, of the real estate intended to be developed, subdivided, or used under the terms of this Ordinance.

Parapet: The top of a building wall or facade which is raised above the roof line.

Parcel: A lot or a continuous number of lots, in the possession of or owned by the same person, persons or other legal entity. Any lot to which a tax parcel has been assigned.

Parking Complex: Four or more individual lots utilizing shared parking facilities are identified as a parking complex.

Parking, Shared: The act of two or more uses on the same or separate properties that are in close proximity sharing parking facilities.

Parking Space: An area on a lot and/or within a building, meeting the standards in this Ordinance, intended for the temporary parking of vehicles.

Paved Area: All areas covered by gravel and/or impervious surfaces, other than buildings and concrete public sidewalks.

Petition: A document submitted to the Board of Commissioners requesting an amendment, change, repeal, or supplement to the zoning district designations set forth in this Ordinance or its related Zoning Map, signed by the owners of 50% or more of the frontage in any district affected by the proposed petition.

Plan/Plat: The map or plan of a subdivision or land development for a particular lot or set of lots, whether preliminary or final.

Plaza: A public open space at ground level, usually surrounded by buildings and streets and used for passive recreational activities and relaxation. Plazas are paved areas typically provided with amenities such as seating, drinking and ornamental fountains, art, trees, and landscaping, for use by pedestrians.

Planning Commission: The Planning Commission of the Township of Abington, as appointed by the Board of Commissioners.

Plot Plan: A plan prepared by a PA licensed architect, engineer, or land surveyor, according to the standards of this Ordinance, showing accurately and with complete dimensions, the boundaries of a site, and the location and size of all buildings, structures, and uses existing or proposed for a given lot or site.

Plug: Small plant grown in a tray with its own separate cell of compost to minimize disturbance.

Premises: A building or other structure, or lawful divided portions thereof, together with the land or lot upon which it is contained.

Preservation: The planned management of land to prevent abuse or destruction of resources such as trees and shrubs as described herein.

Principal Use: The primary use of a building or structure permitted and intended for a given lot, parcel, or premises.

Private Tree: Woody vegetation on land owned by private interest, and not designated as Township-owned land.

Public Tree: Woody vegetation on public and Township owned lands such as right-of-ways and parks.

Recreation: See Entertainment/Recreation Use.

Removed Tree: Any tree that is destroyed, injured or otherwise not protected according to the provisions of this ordinance.

Replacement Tree: A tree required to be planted to compensate for the removal or damage of existing trees on a site. The replacement tree shall be of a species and size appropriate

for the premises on which it will be planted. Replacement nursery stock shall adhere to the ANSI Z60.1 standard.

Residential District: Any district permitting single-family residential uses, unless specified otherwise.

Resource Protection: Land with restricted development potential due to its inherent physical limitations such as floodplain, steep slope, wetland, and woodland areas.

Right-of-Way: A strip of land occupied or set aside for use as a street, utility area, drainage area, travel way, or other use.

A. Legal (a.k.a., "Existing") – The right-of-way currently in existence, as established by appropriate governing bodies.

B. Ultimate (a.k.a., "Future") – The right-of-way deemed necessary by the government entity to provide adequate width for future public improvements.

Road (Public): All public rights-of-way reserved or dedicated for street traffic.

Road (Private): A private right-of-way open to vehicular ingress and egress, established as a separate tract for the benefit of certain adjacent properties. A private road is not a driveway.

Root/Tree Protection Zone: The area within a tree's temporary protection fencing which is to be maintained throughout the entire period of any construction. The protective fencing shall be placed at a distance calculated at 1.5 feet (radius) per each one inch of (DBH) diameter breast height or to the outer edge of the dripline, whichever is greater.

Runoff: Surface water discharge or rate of discharge of a given watershed after a fall of rain or snow that does not enter the soil, but runs off the surface of the land.

SALDO: Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

Screening: A berm, fence, landscaping, wall, or combination thereof that are used to mitigate the view, emitted lighting, sound level, and/or smell of a land use on users of an adjacent lot or public way.

Seeded Meadow: Area that contains native annual and perennial plants, including a mix of grasses and herbaceous flowering plants that match the growing conditions of the site. Non-native invasive species are prohibited in all situations.

Setback: The required minimum horizontal distance between the building line and the right-of way. Where a right-of-way is not present, the setback shall be measured from the front, side, or rear property lines.

Sewage (Disposal) System: A system to collect, treat and dispose of sewage.

A. Public Sewer Service – Serviced by a central, publicly owned-and-operated sewage treatment plant.

B. On-Lot Sewer Service – Any form of sewage service that does not meet the definition of public sewer service. In most cases, this will involve a private on-lot septic system, but may involve an approved community cluster system.

Shade Tree: A woody plant or a portion thereof that has a minimum three-inch caliper, is 14 feet or more in height, has eight feet minimum spread with clear trunk to seven feet, and has full branching structure.

Shade Tree Commission: Abington Township's Shade Tree Commission.

Shade Tree Commission Designee: A person or persons who hold a current International Society of Arboriculture's Certified Arborist or Board-Certified Master Arborist certification, appointed by the Shade Tree Commission, unless such person or persons are appointed by the Board of Commissioners, for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this ordinance.

Shared Access: See §2313: Shared Access: Requirements and Process.

Shrub: A woody plant, usually with multiple stems, each of which has a DBH of less than three inches with a minimum height of 24 inches.

Sign: Any letter, number, symbol, figure, character, mark, design, picture, word, trademark, or combination of these which is assembled, constructed, placed, attached, painted, erected, fastened, projected, or manufactured in any manner whatsoever, and which is used or intended to convey information to, or attract the public to any article, event, place, subject, merchandise, person, place, firm, business, and which is displayed in any manner or place whatsoever so that it can be seen from the public right-of-way, or street.

Single-Family Detached: See Article XXI: Use Regulations for definitions of specific uses.

Single and Separate: The ownership of a lot, tract, or parcel of land by one or more persons, partnerships, corporations, or other legal entities, which is separate and distinct from the ownership of any abutting or adjoining lot, tract, or parcel. Separate and distinct means that the lot, tract, or parcel owned does not abut or adjoin any other lot, tract, or parcel of land under the ownership or control of the same one or more persons, partnerships, corporations, or other legal entities.

Site (a.k.a. "Tract"): A lot or parcel, or contiguous lots or parcels of land defined by survey and collectively intended to have one or more uses, or intended to be subdivided or developed as part of a subdivision or land development proposal.

Site or Tract Area (may or may not include multiple lots): Tract area; the total area of a proposed development, regardless of interior lot lines or proposed lots, streets or easements.

A. Gross Site or Tract Area – All land on a site excluding that within the existing legal right-of-way, determined from a survey plot plan.

B. Net Site or Tract Area – The buildable area of a site, determined by subtracting all land area without development opportunity (dedicated right-of-way and land undevelopable due to the presence of environmental features) from gross site area.

Site Disturbance: Any activity involving the installation of ground cover; tree removal; grading, filling or excavation of land; or the erection of a dwelling or other structure; or the modification, removal, filling, or alteration of an existing storm water management facility or drainage easement.

Site Plan: A plan or drawing prepared to scale, accurately showing all information required by these regulations with respect to a development or use proposal. Some uses as stated herein, or as required in the judgment of the Code Official, must have a site plan prepared

by a PA licensed land surveyor; a.k.a., “plot plan”, “survey plan”.

Special Exception: A zoning use approved by the Township Zoning Hearing Board, provided certain established conditions are complied with and maintained in the interest of the public health, safety and welfare; pursuant to Articles VI and IX of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

Special Use Permit: A permit or legal document issued by the Township granting and authorizing a temporary, specific use for a lot or structure, or portions thereof.

Steep Slope: Natural or man-made areas of land where the average slope exceeds 15%, measured over a ten foot (10’) horizontal distance.

Story: The horizontal portion of a building located between the surface of any floor and the floor or roof next above.

Street: A strip of land, including the existing right-of-way and not limited to a paved cartway, intended for use as a means of vehicular and pedestrian circulation to provide access to more than one lot, and which includes thoroughfare, alley, avenue, boulevard, court, expressway, highway, lane, place and road. A street can be public or private.

Street Line: The dividing line between the street and the lot. The street line shall be the same as the legal right-of-way provided that, where an ultimate right-of-way width for a road or street has been established by ordinance or official map, then that width shall determine the location of the street line.

Street Tree: A tree located within the public right-of way, often placed between the sidewalk and curb.

Street Wall: The line of decorative, low fences or walls, and landscaping that screens front-yard parking from the street and public sidewalk. The street wall helps establish the built environment near the street and public sidewalk, improves aesthetics, and encourages pedestrian activity.

Streetscape: The space between the buildings on either side of a street that defines its character. The elements of a streetscape include building frontage/façade, landscaping and street trees, sidewalks and paving, street furniture (benches, kiosks, trash receptacles, and newspaper boxes), signs, and lighting.

Structure: A combination of materials assembled, constructed, or erected at a fixed location, at, above, or below grade, including a building; the use of which requires location on the ground or attachment to something having location on the ground. Driveways, parking lots, patios, walkways, sidewalks, and the like erected at grade level shall not be considered structures. Swimming pools and recreations courts are considered to be structures.

Subdivision: The division or re-division of a lot, tract, or parcel of land by any means into two or more lots, tracts, parcels, or other divisions of land including changes in existing lot lines for the purpose, whether immediate or future, of lease, partition by the court for distribution to heirs or devisees, transfer of ownership or building or lot development; provided, however, that the subdivision by lease of land for agricultural purposes into parcels of more than ten acres, not involving any new street or easement of access or any residential dwelling, shall be exempted.

Supplementary Regulations: Zoning regulations and standards which are common and

applicable to all zoning districts, even though they may not be set forth in the district regulations.

Township Engineer: The individual or firm appointed by the Board of Commissioners to be the municipal engineer.

Tree: Any hard-wooded perennial plant, whether evergreen or deciduous, or a species which normally reaches a height of eight feet or more at maturity.

Tree Mass: A group of trees growing very close together such as a woodland, woodlot, thicket, or stand.

Tree Protection Zone: The maximum of either the area whose radius equals 1.5 times the tree's DBH in feet, or the area within the boundary that is one foot outside the tree's drip line on all sides of individual trees or tree/vegetation masses. This zone is intended to provide for the tree's long-term viability and stability, and to preserve the soil within the tree protection zone.

Tree Survey Plan: Plan identifying the size, species and location of all existing trees having a diameter at breast height (DBH) of six inches or greater and denoting each tree to be saved, removed or planted with the location of the tree protection fences and the proposed schedule of replacement trees.

Tree Topping: Reduction of tree size using internodal cuts (the area between lateral buds or branches) without regard to tree health or structural integrity. Topping is not an acceptable pruning practice. Other common names for the practice include hat-racking, heading, rounding over, and tipping.

Turf: The grass used on a lawn. This type of grass is in contrast with ornamental grasses, which are generally larger, taller, and grow in bunches.

Twin Dwelling Unit (Single-Family Semi-Detached): See Article XXI: Use Regulations for definitions of specific uses.

Use: Any activity, alteration, addition, business, occupation, or operation carried on, or intended to be carried on in a building, structure, lot, parcel, or premises.

A. Use, Accessory: A minor use of a building, structure, lot, or premises; located on the same lot or premises with an established principal use; and clearly incidental or subordinate to, and operated in conjunction with, the principal use; and not to occupy more than 10% of the gross leasable floor area of the building, structure, or premises for commercial uses, and not more than 25% of the gross first floor area for residential uses.

B. Use, Principal: A principal use is the main or primary use of a building, structure, lot or premises, for which a use code classification has been assigned, and which accounts for at least 90% of the gross leasable floor area of the building, structure, lot, or premises.

C. Use, Temporary: A minor use of a building, structure, lot, or premises that is instituted for a limited time period not to exceed 30 days, because of an emergency situation or some unique set of circumstances and is located on the same lot or premises with an established principal use. A temporary use shall not be authorized for a time period longer than the circumstances or emergency may

warrant. Temporary use approval shall not be granted for periodic or repetitive uses in excess of four (4) times per year.

Utilities: Those services customarily rendered by public utility corporations, municipalities, or municipal authorities, relating to the supply of electricity, gas, telephone, television, sewage, water, including the appurtenances used to supply such services, and excluding cellular phone systems.

Vegetation: Plant life, including but not limited to trees, shrubs, flowering plants, and grasses, except those prohibited by this ordinance.

Verge: A strip separating a sidewalk from the curb, and consisting of grass, landscaping, or decorative paving.

Violation: An infraction of any provision or use expressed in this Ordinance for which remedies are set forth by law and within this Ordinance.

Walls, Blank: Building facades lacking doors or windows.

Water Course: Any permanent or intermittent stream, river, brook, creek, or a channel, ditch, or swale, whether natural or man-made, for the conveyance of surface and underground water. Storm sewers are considered to be water courses.

Water System: A system designed to transmit water from a source to users, in compliance with the requirements of the appropriate state agencies and the Township.

A. Public Water Service – Service by a central water system that is owned and operated by a municipal authority or a water company with a service area defined by the State Public Utility Commission which transmits water from a common source to more than 20 dwellings or principal uses.

B. On-Lot Water Supply – All approved water supply systems that are not public.

Wetlands: Those land areas which are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soils conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas as set forth and defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Woodland Area: An area comprising at least one quarter (1/4) acre of land where trees of at least 6 inches DBH comprise a continuous canopy.

Yard: An open area, unobstructed from the ground up by a principal structure on a lot, and extending along a right-of-way line, or where a right-of-way line is not present, a lot line or street line, inward to the structure. The length of a yard shall be measured as the shortest distance between the nearest point of the foundation wall of the principal structure and a right-of-way line, or where a right-of-way line is not present, a lot line or street line. The minimum restricted yard area is that portion of a specific yard that lies between the appropriate right-of-way line, or where a right-of-way line is not present, a property line and the building setback line established for that specific yard.

A. Front Yard – A yard extending across the entire width of the lot and situated between the front line of the building and the right-of-way line, or where a right-of-way line is not present, a front line of the lot.

B. Rear Yard – A yard extending across the full width of the lot and lying between the

right-of- way line, or where a right-of-way line is not present, the rear lot line and the nearest line of the building.

C. Side Yard – A yard lying between the right-of-way line, or where a right-of-way line is not present, a side lot line and the nearest line of the building, extending from the inward edge of the front yard to the inward edge of the rear yard.

For more information on Yards, see §2601.M Yard Requirement.

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Zoning Ordinance Article XXIV: Landscaping

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Article XXIV: Landscaping

It is necessary to consult both this Article and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) for a complete assessment of landscaping requirements. Specific definitions are listed in Article II, Section 201.

SECTION 2400. INTENT

Article I, Section 27 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania states that people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic, and aesthetic values of the environment. Trees and other vegetation improve air and water quality, reduce soil erosion, noise, and glare, provide habitat for desirable wildlife, moderate the climate, and enhance community image and property values.

The purpose of this Article is to encourage the preservation and protection of trees and other vegetation through sound land use practices and/or requiring new landscape material in critical areas of land developments and land use. The intent of Article XXIV in conjunction with the Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance is the following:

- A. To preserve, protect, and maintain existing trees and woodlands in Abington Township and to increase the overall tree canopy and understory on both public and private lands.
- B. To effectively integrate the natural and built environment, thereby reinforcing the social and economic stability of the Township and encouraging the orderly and beneficial development of the community.
- C. To ensure that any site disturbance shall respect existing trees as a natural resource. This includes grading, filling or excavation of land, demolition, building, subdivision, land development, zoning change, and conditional use. As such, impervious areas shall be laid out in a manner so as to preserve the healthy trees on the site and to preserve adequate planting space for future trees and vegetation whenever possible. This will ensure that future development is well designed to protect the character, health, safety, and general welfare of the community.
- D. To ensure that no trees are destroyed on property proposed for development within five years prior to site disturbance, (including grading, filling, or excavation of land), demolition, building, subdivision, land development, zoning change or conditional use.
- E. To prohibit any clear cutting of trees that is not in compliance with the provisions

of this Article, nor approved by the Board of Commissioners.

F. To encourage the replacement of removed trees and vegetation with native species.

G. To provide for the buffering of certain types of land uses and screening of certain site elements to minimize their impact upon their surroundings.

H. To conserve existing healthy plant communities, such as woodlands, and to require new landscape plantings in critical areas of new land developments and land use in order to:

1. Reduce soil erosion and protect surface water quality by minimizing stripping of existing woodlands or tree masses.
2. Reduce stormwater runoff velocity and volume by providing planting areas where stormwater can infiltrate, and to aesthetically improve stormwater management facilities without impairing their function.
3. Improve air quality by conserving existing or creating new plantings, which produce oxygen and remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
4. Provide animal habitat.
5. Provide wind breaks, shade, and the other microclimate benefits of trees and landscape plantings.
6. Conserve historically, culturally, or environmentally important landscapes such as woodland areas, scenic views, or aesthetic natural areas.
7. Preserve and enhance property values through the implementation of good landscape architectural standards.
8. Provide planted and architectural visual screens around visually obtrusive site elements within land development and between land uses.
9. Enhance the aesthetic appearance of the community and provide privacy and beauty.
10. Improve aesthetics and traffic flow and provide traffic calming effects in parking lots and medians by requiring planted parking islands and medians to separate traffic.

11. Conserve energy by moderating solar radiation and providing shade.
12. Improve the environment for pedestrians along streets, parking lots, and other pedestrian areas to provide cooling, encourage pedestrian activity, and reduce the urban heat island effect.
13. Aesthetically improve the appearance and character of public and private streets.

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SECTION 2401. APPLICABILITY

- A. General applicability. This article applies to all public and private trees. Any party responsible for any site disturbance work (including grading, filling, or excavation of land), demolition, building, subdivision, land development, zoning change or conditional use shall comply with the terms of Article XXIV.
- B. Clear Cutting. No clear cutting shall be permitted under any circumstance unless in compliance with the terms of Article XXIV and approved by Board of Commissioners.
- C. Tree Removal and Replacement Requirements. The intent is to practically respect individual property rights while protecting the canopy resource and associated benefits that are essential to the greater good, including stormwater management, air and water quality, and neighborhood character.
1. No owner or occupant shall be permitted to remove any trees that have been planted or preserved to meet the requirements of Township ordinances or an application approved by the Township Board of Commissioners.
 2. For the removal of one tree of any size on a property within a five-year timespan, a replacement tree must be installed, with no minimum caliper requirement.
 3. The removal of two or more trees on any property within a five-year timespan will require approval by a Shade Tree Commission Designee prior to removing the trees. The trees shall be replaced as follows:
 - i. If the sum of the DBH of the removed trees is less than 20" DBH, each removed tree must be replaced with a tree, with no minimum caliper requirement (1:1 replacement).
 - ii. If the sum of the DBH of the removed trees is 20" or greater, each removed tree must be replaced either with a minimum 3" caliper tree (1:1 replacement) or each removed tree must be replaced with two trees, with no caliper requirement (1:2 replacement).
 4. Replacement Tree Requirements. The following requirements shall apply unless otherwise approved by the Shade Tree Commission Designee:
 - i. If a tree that is a Native Plant is removed, it shall be replaced with a tree that

is a Native Plant. Whenever more than one replacement tree is required, at least 75% of replacement trees shall be trees that are Native Plants.

- ii. Replacement trees shall be planted within six months of the removal of an existing tree.

D. Exceptions to the above tree removal and replacement requirements are as follows:

1. The removal of trees identified as dead or diseased by the Township or a Shade Tree Commission Designee.
2. The removal of any tree which has become or threatens to become a danger to life or property as determined by the Township or a Shade Tree Commission Designee.
3. The removal of trees required for approved utility construction within established easement areas.
4. The removal of trees for sale in the ordinary course of business from horticultural properties, such as farms, nurseries, or orchards.
- e. Forestry practices, in keeping with established best management practices for selective harvesting and sustained yield forestry.

SECTION 2404. TREE SURVEY, PRESERVATION, PROTECTION AND REPLACEMENT

A. Tree Survey Plan

1. Applicability. Every application for a site disturbance permit, grading permit, demolition permit, building permit, subdivision and land development or zoning change application shall include a tree survey plan as described herein.
2. Features. The tree survey plan is to include each of the following features.
 - a. The plan is to show every tree over 6" DBH within the subject property and every tree over 6" DBH on all abutting properties within 20' of the subject property boundaries.
 - b. All heritage trees and boundary trees shall be individually noted on the tree survey plan.
 - c. Public trees. A tree on any publicly owned property, including the public right-of-way, whose drip line is within five feet the property boundary or any excavation or construction of any building, structure, or street work, shall be shown on the tree survey plan. All public trees shall be protected during construction.
 - d. Wooded areas. For wooded areas, delineating the area on the plan as "wooded" is acceptable if this area is to be protected and no construction activities, such as utility installation, material laydown, etc., will take place in that area.
 - e. Topography. The tree survey plan shall contain existing and proposed topographic information at two-foot contour intervals.
 - f. Built features. The tree survey plan shall show all existing and proposed buildings and structures, driveways, and parking areas, drainage structures, water detention/retention areas, utilities, construction material staging area and all proposed limits of grading and limits of disturbance and shall also include all the specific requirements in the Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO).

- g. Tree inventory. The tree survey plan shall designate each tree to “TO REMAIN” or “TO BE REMOVED” or “REMOVED,” in accordance with the following criteria:
 - i. A mature tree or tree mass shall be considered “TO REMAIN” only if it fits all of the following criteria: The tree(s) are clear of any proposed sight triangles and do not, by their location or apparent health, pose any undue threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the community. Mature trees or tree masses that do not fit the above criteria shall be designated “TO BE REMOVED.”
 - ii. The tree survey shall show any tree lost or destroyed within five years prior to the submission of an application, as a REMOVED TREE and shall be replaced in accordance with this Article.
- h. Tree protection fencing. The tree survey plan shall show the location of tree protection fences for each tree or trees to remain
- i. Tree replacement schedule. The tree survey plan shall show the proposed tree replacement schedule and proposed tree placement.

B. Tree Preservation.

- 1. Intent. All subdivision and land developments shall be laid out in such a manner as to minimize the removal of healthy trees and shrubs on the site. Special consideration shall be given to preserving heritage trees. It shall be incumbent on the applicant to prove that vegetation removal is minimized. If challenged by the township, the applicant shall produce evidence such as written documents or plans certified by a registered landscape architect, a certified arborist, or other qualified professional showing that no alternative layouts are possible and that no alternative clearing or grading plan would reduce the loss of mature trees, tree mass, and woodland areas.
- 2. Steep Slopes. Existing trees located within a Steep Slope Conservation District shall be preserved as indicated in Article XVI Section 1603: Steep Slope Conservation District Protection Standards.
- 3. Tree removal near a Tree Protection Zone. Trees being removed shall not be felled, pushed, or pulled into a tree protection zone or into trees that are to be retained.
- 4. Underground utilities. If there is no alternative but to locate a utility line through a tree protection zone, tunneling shall be used instead of trenching.

5. Preservation of drainage patterns. Alteration of existing drainage patterns and water supply for the protected vegetation shall be minimized.
6. Invasive vines which threaten the health of any approved preserved tree shall be cut at the base and at 4 to 6' elevation using a hand saw, snips, or loppers, and treated with a basal herbicide to minimize regrowth. The vine shall not be pulled out of the tree but shall be allowed to die in place.
7. Transplanting trees. Individual trees of transplantable size and condition designated "TO BE REMOVED," are encouraged to be transplanted from one area of the site to another. Transplanted trees must conform to the maintenance requirements of this ordinance.
 - a. Any tree transplanted/moved using the tree spade method from one area on the permitted site and relocated to a different area of the permitted site will be given a DBH inch-per-inch credit.
 - b. A tree spade transplanting agreement must be signed by the applicant and approved by the Shade Tree Commission Designee prior to plan approval.
 - c. Transplanting shall be performed using a tree spade of proper dimension per ANSI Z60.1 standard.
 - d. Transplanting shall comply with the current ANSI Standards and Best Management Practices (BMPs).

C. Tree Protection.

1. Intent: Every application subject to this Article shall be prepared in such a manner to protect the healthy trees and shrubs to remain on the site. This also includes protecting the soil resource within the protection zone(s). Examples of Tree Protection Zones are shown in Figure 24.01

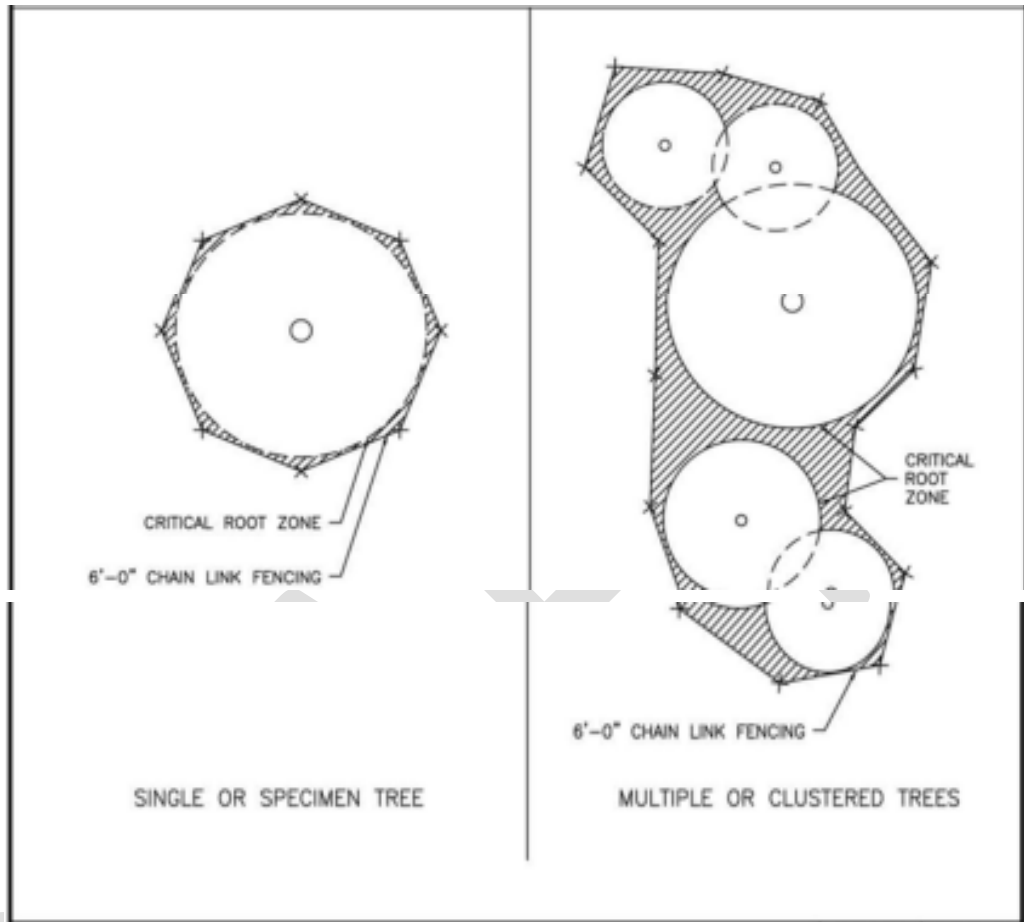


Figure 24.01 Examples: Tree Protection Zones (TPZ) are the area within the fencing.

2. Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) layout.

- a. The TPZ fence(s), constructed according to the standards expressed below, shall be erected the maximum of either the area whose radius equal to 1.5 times the tree's DBH in feet, or the area within the boundary that is one foot outside the drip line on all sides of individual trees or tree/vegetation masses. The tree protection fence(s) shall be placed to prevent disturbance to or compaction of the soil within the tree protection zone(s).

- b. Sediment, retention, and detention basins shall not be constructed within or discharge into the tree protection zone(s).

3. Delineation of Tree Protection Zones: Prior to construction, tree protection

zones shall be delineated by the following methods on the site:

- a. Where applicable, the tree protection zone that is delineated on the site prior to construction shall conform to the approved development plans.
- b. All trees scheduled to remain shall be marked. Where groups of trees or woodlands exist, only the trees on the outer edge need to be marked.
- c. Trees outside a tree protected zone may be left standing as protection between the trunks of the trees retained and the limits of grading. When trees are used as protection, the TP fence requirement may be eliminated; however, the tree protection zone on the approved plan shall be marked in the field so that the additional buffer area is delineated. When this method of protection is used, these additional trees shall be removed at the time of project completion without harming the trees to be preserved.

4. TPZ Fence Requirements:

- a. TPZ Fence Material: The fencing shall be constructed of chain link (not plastic snow fencing), at least six feet high and installed according to ASTM F 567 and manufacturer's written instructions.
- b. TPZ fence installation:
 - i. Post Excavation: Hand-excavate holes for posts taking care not to disturb roots larger than 1.5 inches in diameter. If necessary, adjust post spacing to not damage or injure roots. Excavate to diameters and spacing indicated (and adjusted for roots), in firm, undisturbed or compacted soil.
 - ii. Post Setting: Line posts should be set using quarry fines or grit as backfill, compacted to hold the fence erect. If galvanized base units or drilled concrete blocks of sufficient size are used, these shall be physically affixed to the ground in such a way so that they cannot be moved. Verify that posts are set plumb, aligned, and at correct height and spacing.
 - iii. Terminal end and corner posts shall be set in concrete per ASTM F567 standards. Protect portion of posts above ground from concrete splatter. Place concrete around posts and vibrate or tamp for consolidation. Verify that posts are set plumb, aligned, and at correct height and spacing, and hold in position during placement and finishing operations until concrete is sufficiently cured.

- iv. Terminal Posts: Locate terminal end and corner posts per ASTM F 567 and terminal pull posts at changes in horizontal or vertical alignment.
 - v. Line Posts: Space line posts uniformly at 8 feet +/- 6 inches when required to avoid roots. Posts shall be installed in straight alignment unless adjusted to avoid roots.
 - vi. Post Bracing Assemblies: Install according to ASTM F 567, maintaining plumb position and alignment of fencing. Install braces at end posts and at both sides of corner and pull posts. Install so posts are plumb when diagonal rod is under proper tension.
 - vi. Tension Wire: Install according to ASTM F 567, maintaining plumb position and alignment of fencing. Pull wire taut, without sags. Fasten fabric to tension wire with 0.120-inch diameter hog rings of same material and finish as fabric wire, spaced a maximum of 24 inches o.c. Install tension wire in locations indicated before stretching fabric.
 - vii. Top Rail: Install according to ASTM F 567, maintaining plumb position and alignment of fencing. Run rail continuously through line post caps, bending to radius for curved runs and terminating into rail end attached to posts or post caps fabricated to receive rail at terminal posts. Provide expansion couplings as recommended by fencing manufacturer.
 - viii. Intermediate Rails: Install in one piece at post-height center span, spanning between posts, using fittings, special offset fittings, and accessories.
 - ix. Tension or Stretcher Bars: Thread through fabric and secure to end, corner, and pull posts with tension bands spaced not more than 15 inches o.c.
 - x. Tie Wires: Use wire of proper length to firmly secure fabric to line posts and rails. Attach wire at one end to chain-link fabric, wrap wire around post a minimum of 180 degrees, and attach other end to chain-link fabric per ASTM F 626. Bend ends of wire to prevent hazard to individuals and clothing. Tie fabric to line posts 12 inches o.c. and to braces 24 inches o.c.
5. TPZ Gates: For each separate fenced area, provide a minimum of one 3-foot-wide gate. Gates shall be lockable. The location of the gates shall be approved by the Shade Tree Commission Designee.

6. TPZ Signage: The protective fencing shall have rigid plastic or metal sheet signage with attachment holes pre-punched and reinforced; legibly printed with nonfading lettering and as follows:

- a. Signs prohibiting access to tree protection areas shall be 10" x 12", made of weatherproof materials, with a bright yellow background and black letters reading "TREE PROTECTION ZONE (TPZ) - KEEP OUT, no grade change, material storage, or equipment is permitted within this TPZ. The tree protection barrier must not be removed without the authorization of the Township. CALL: ABINGTON CODE ENFORCEMENT 267-536-1012 TO REPORT VIOLATIONS".
- b. Install one sign, per above, spaced approximately every 35 feet on protection zone fencing, but no fewer than four signs with each facing a different direction

7. TPZ Timing and Access:

- a. The tree protection zone fence for trees and other vegetation to remain shall be installed prior to the preconstruction conference with the Shade Tree Commission Designee, and prior to any and all work conducted, e.g., excavation, material lay down, equipment brought on site, grading, trenching (especially silt fence), cleaning, etc., and shall be physically protected throughout the construction process.
- b. Install the tree protection zone fencing along edges of protection zones in a manner that will prevent people and animals from easily entering protected area except by entrance gates. Construct fencing so as not to obstruct safe passage or visibility where fencing is located adjacent to pedestrian walkways or in close proximity to street intersections, drives, or other vehicular circulation.

8. TPZ Maintenance:

- a. Maintain tree protection zones free of weeds, trash, refuse or debris. Weeds shall be defined as all grasses, annual plants, and vegetation in excess of 10", other than cultivated trees or shrubs; however, this shall not include cultivated flowers and gardens.
- b. Maintain tree protection zone fencing and signage in good condition as acceptable to the Township or its designated assignee.

- c. Any observed damage to the trees within the TPZ or to remain shall be immediately reported to the Township (Code enforcement officer) or Shade Tree Commission Designee and remedied as soon as is practicable.
- d. Any damage to the fencing or encroachment on the protected areas shall be remedied immediately.
- e. All necessary measures shall be taken to maintain healthy living conditions for existing trees to be preserved. Such measures shall include but not be limited to periodic washing of leaves for the removal of dust, irrigation, etc.
 - i. If trees within the TPZ were irrigated prior to construction, provide a similar volume of irrigation to the trees during construction.
 - ii. If trees within the TPZ were mulched prior to construction, the entire TPZ area shall be mulched. Mulch shall be placed 6" away from the trunk flare and not be more than 3" deep.

9. Prohibited Activities.

- a. Nothing shall be stored, stockpiled, temporarily placed, or allowed in the tree protection zone.
- b. No topsoil shall be removed from within, or fill added to a tree protection zone.
- c. No chemical or fuel storage, refueling or maintenance of equipment or wash down of cement handling equipment shall be permitted within 100 feet of any tree protection zone.
- d. Vehicles and equipment shall not enter into a tree protection zone; however, temporary access to protection zone is permitted subject to written preapproval by the Shade Tree Commission Designee. As directed by the Shade Tree Commission Designee, temporary access may require anti-compaction matting or other anti-compaction device effective against soil compaction. If this is the case, maintain anti-compaction devices so long as access is permitted.
- e. Excavating for utility trenches within a TPZ are prohibited; however

boring or tunneling for utility installation at a depth of 36" or greater is allowed within the TPZ if access pits are located outside of the TPZ.

10. Construction Activities Adjacent to a TPZ.

- a. Construction, excavation, and grade changes shall not encroach upon a tree protection zone.
- b. When the original grade cannot be retained at the tree protection zone line, a retaining wall, or some other devices, as approved by the Township, shall be constructed outside the tree protection zone that meets township standards and provides for drainage through the wall so water will not accumulate on either side.
- c. When stumps are located within 10 feet of a tree protection zone, they shall be left standing or removed, and if removed shall be by means of a stump grinder to minimize the effect on the surrounding root systems.
- d. Tree roots which must be severed adjacent to the TPZ shall be cut by a backhoe or similar equipment aligned radially to the tree, or by a fine-tooth ditch excavator used perpendicular to the root. These methods reduce the lateral movement of the roots during excavation which, if done by other methods, could damage the intertwined roots of adjacent trees. Within four hours of any severance of roots, all tree roots exposed and/or damaged shall be trimmed and covered temporarily with moist peat moss, burlap, or biodegradable material to keep them from drying out until permanent cover can be installed.
- e. Root pruning is to be done whenever roots of trees are exposed during construction, all root pruning to be done using ANSI standard A300 (part 8) for root management. The root ends are to be cut off cleanly and the roots covered by dirt or plastic for as long as the root is exposed. When performing a trench excavation, the roots have to be cut on the tree-side of the trench prior to excavating.)

11. Removing the TPZ fence.

- a. Remove TPZ fence only when construction operations are complete, and equipment has been removed from the site.
- b. Do not allow construction vehicles to enter the TPZ to remove the

fence.

12. Damaged Trees. If the Shade Tree Commission Designee determines that the approved preserved trees have not been adequately protected or that they have been damaged and are required to be removed, they shall be replaced at the expense of the applicant in accordance with this Article.

D. Tree Replacement.

1. Pre-Approval. Tree replacement calculations or estimations shall be submitted to the Shade Tree Commission Designee for approved approval before any clearing commences.
2. Basic Tree Replacement Requirements.
 - a. Replacement of individual trees 'TO BE REMOVED.' Every tree determined to be living and healthy, with a DBH of six inches or greater and which is designated 'TO BE REMOVED,' shall be replaced with one or more new shade trees of a type approved by the Shade Tree Commission Designee with a trunk diameter of not less than three inches in caliper. The total caliper of replacement trees, (measured at six inches above the ground line), shall equal or exceed the DBH of the tree(s) removed. An example is provided below in Figure 24.02:

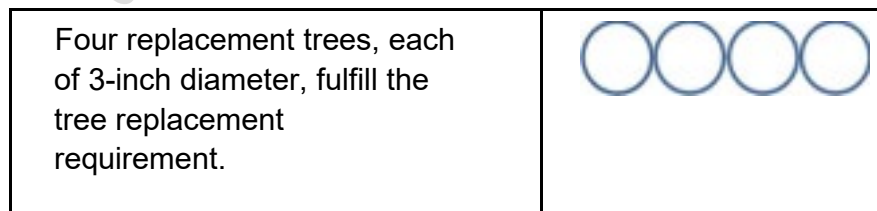
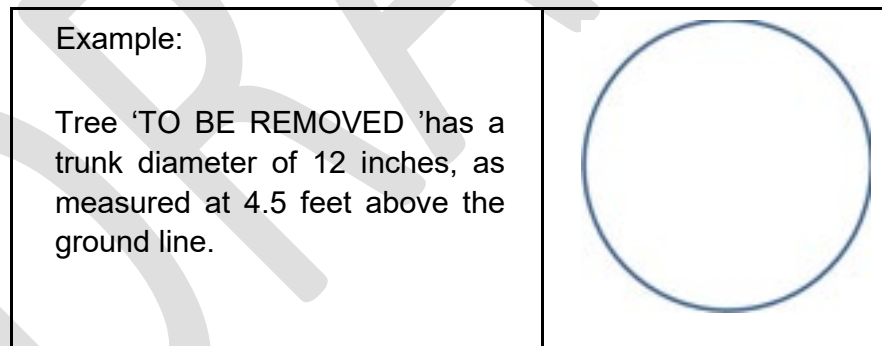


Figure 24.02 Replacing trees based on DBH

- b. Replacement of trees in wooded areas. Subject to the prior approval of the Township or its designated assignee, the number of replacement trees for a wooded parcel may be calculated as follows:
 - i. A minimum of three, 100' x 100' square areas will be staked out by the developer. These areas should be representative of the overall site.
 - ii. The Shade Tree Commission Designee will choose one or more sample areas for inventory.
 - iii. All trees, greater than or equal to 6" DBH, in each selected sample area will be measured, and the totals averaged to determine the average summation of tree diameter per 10,000 ft.² of area.
 - iv. This average quantity of tree diameter per area will be used to determine both the quantity of trees being removed and the number of trees to be replaced per 10,000 square feet of disturbance.
- c. Heritage Trees. No heritage tree is to be removed for any reason without the prior approval of the Board of Commissioners after recommendation by the Shade Tree Commission.
- d. SALDO requirements. Replacement trees shall be planted in addition to any trees required by planting requirements otherwise set forth in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO).
- e. Replacement Species. The species of replacement trees shall be subject to the prior approval of the Shade Tree Commission Designee. Species are to be hardy to the area and noninvasive and at least 75% shall be Native Plants, as set forth in Article II. The applicant can refer to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry's latest publication of tree species for listing of species selection.
- f. Deer protection. All replacement trees shall have deer protection on the tree trunks at a minimum of 4 1/2 feet from the ground up to prevent bark damage without the use of chemicals. Said deer protection shall remain in place and maintained 18 months from the post-construction conference acceptance. Beyond this time period, best management practices advise that deer protection remain on the trees until they reach a minimum of 5" DBH.

- g. Irrigation. All replacement trees are to be irrigated by a method that provides water directly to the root ball, as needed until a normal root to crown ratio is established. Schedules and techniques are to be tailored to individual sites.
3. Substitutions. If the Shade Tree Commission Designee determines that there is not sufficient area on the development site for the placement of replacement trees of 3-in caliper, substitutions may be made as follows.
- a. Replacement with larger-caliper trees. Trees of caliper up to 6- inches may be substituted, provided the total caliper replacement meets or exceeds that which is TO BE REMOVED. Examples are provided below in Figure 24.03:

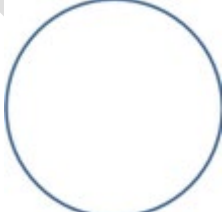



Tree 'TO BE REMOVED' has a trunk diameter of 12 inches, as measured at six inches above the ground line	
Three replacement trees, each of 4-inch diameter, fulfill the tree replacement requirement.	
Alternately, two replacement trees, each of 6-inch diameter, fulfill the tree replacement requirement.	
Alternately, three replacement trees, one of 6-inch caliper and two each of 3-inch caliper, fulfill the tree replacement formula.	

Figure 24.03 Options for substituting caliper-size replacement trees

- b. Replacement with smaller trees, shrubs, groundcover or (plant) plugs. If the Shade Tree Commission Designee determines that there is not sufficient area on the development site for the placement of replacement trees, substitutions of smaller plant stock may be made

as follows.

- i. Ornamental/flowering or evergreen trees. A maximum of 30% of the replacement trees may be replaced with ornamental/flowering trees or evergreen trees that are Native Plants at a ratio of two flowering or two evergreen trees per required three-inch-caliper shade tree.
- ii. Shrubs. A maximum of 20% of the replacement trees may be replaced as shrubs that are Native Plants with a minimum size of 24 inches in height at a ratio of six shrubs per required three-inch-caliper shade tree. Shrubs shall adhere to ANSI Z60.1 Standards.
- iii. Groundcover. A maximum of 10% of the replacement trees may be replaced as groundcover that are Native Plants at a ratio of 40 plants to one three inch-caliper shade trees. The minimum lot size of the groundcover will be a one-gallon container, with a well-established root system and adhere to ANSI Z60.1 Standards.
- iv. Plugs. A maximum of 5% of replacement trees may be replaced with plugs that are Native Plants at a rate of 240 plugs at a minimum of 1.25 inches x 1.25 inches with a 2.5 inch deep root zone for every three-inch-caliper shade tree or seeded meadows at a rate of 250 square feet for every three-inch-caliper shade tree, or a combination of the plugs and seeded meadow not to exceed a combined total of 5%. The selection of plants for the seeded meadow must include a blend of Native Plants with different growing heights, a ground layer, a mid-height layer and a tall perennial/grass layer. The meadow must be of a native mix and mowed once per year in the months of March or April to arrest the succession of development of woody plants. The seeded meadow must have a maintained edge along the perimeter of the property. The maintained edge or mow area shall consist of a five- foot-wide band, maintained at four inches in height. The seeding rates and varieties shall consist of a combination of 10 perennial varieties at nine pounds per acre of pure live seed and 13 annual varieties at six pounds per acre of pure live seed, totaling no more than 15 pounds per acre of pure live seed.
- v. Stormwater Best Management Practices. Additional credits for tree replacements may be allowed based upon the type and extent of the stormwater best management practices utilized on the site that are approved by the Township Engineer.

4. Credit for approved preserved trees in subdivisions and land developments. The requirements for trees in any land development or subdivision shall, whenever possible, be met by preserving existing trees. If a tree in excess of 6" DBH is preserved within a 20' perimeter buffer, the total number of replacement trees required to be planted may be reduced.
 - a. The credit for approved preserved trees (within the Limit of Disturbance plus 20 feet) shall be calculated as follows:

DBH of Preserved Tree	Number of DBH Credits Per Preserved Tree
6" to 11.99"	2
12" to 17.99"	4
18" to 29.99"	6
30" or greater	8

Figure 24.04 Credit for approved preserved trees

- b. Any tree preserved whose dripline lies within 5 feet from any proposed buildings, structures, paving, parking, or utilities (overhead or underground); or within five feet from any proposed changes in grade or drainage such as excavations, mounding, or impoundments, shall not be considered an approved preserved tree.
5. Commemorative Shade Tree Fund. In the event that the Shade Tree Commission Designee determines that replanting is impractical or impossible on site, the applicant shall make payment to the Abington Commemorative Shade Tree Fund in lieu of replanting in accordance with the tree replacement formula set forth in this Article. The amount shall be \$500 (in 2023 dollars, which shall be adjusted for inflation annually based on the Consumer Price Index) per tree (3-inch caliper equivalent). The Commemorative Shade Tree fund will be used to plant and establish trees in suitable locations within the Township, as identified by the Shade Tree Commission.

E. Reviews and Inspections.

1. Township Plan(s) review

- a. The tree survey and the tree protection plan shall be reviewed by the Shade Tree Commission Designee.
- b. Subject to the recommendation of the Shade Tree Commission Designee, the number of replacement trees shall be calculated using the formulas specified in this Article.
- c. The final landscape design shall be reviewed by the Shade Tree Commission, and its recommendations shall be submitted to Township staff as part of the overall Township approval process.

2. Pre-construction Conference.

- a. Upon approval of any submission or permit subject to this Article, and prior to any construction, demolition or earth disturbance on the site, an onsite preconstruction conference shall be held between the Shade Tree Commission Designee, the contractor, and the applicant.
- b. The Shade Tree Commission Designee shall inspect the tree protection fences and other protective devices which have been installed to protect trees. The Shade Tree Commission's designee will present copy of Inspection sign-off sheet to owner/developer.
- c. After the preconstruction conference, Shade Tree Commission Designee shall notify the Township of its findings in writing. Upon Township staff approval of the tree protection measures, demolition, grading and construction may proceed, provided that all pertinent approvals and permits have been secured.

3. Tree and Vegetation Inspection.

- a. Schedule of inspections. Tree protection, plant stock size, quality and quantity and final inspection are to verify compliance with the approved landscape plans and the SALDO, Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances. The following schedule of inspections shall be made by the Shade Tree Commission Designee:
 - i. Tree protection fencing installed as per plan.
 - ii. Plant stock size, quantity & quality inspection as per plan, and prior to installation.
 - iii. Plant stock installation, deer protection & mulching inspection as per

plan, post installation. Calculation of approved trees actually remaining after construction shall be based on a procedure similar to that used in completing the tree survey. In the event the completed project is not in compliance with the approved schedule of preserved trees on the final plan, the applicant shall receive written instructions from the Township addressing reparation for all removed trees. The applicant shall complete the reparation, weather permitting, within 45 days of receiving such notification.

- iv. Plant stock inspection 17 months after installation to verify mortality and replacement, prior to escrow release.
- b. Replacement guarantee. All replacement plantings shall be guaranteed and maintained in a healthy and/or sound condition for at least 18 months or shall be replaced. The Shade Tree Commission Designee shall inspect the project and fill out and submit the schedule of inspection form to the Township during month 17 upon inspection.

SECTION 2405. TREE MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

A. Public Tree Management and Maintenance.

1. Permits. Written authorization from the Township is required to remove from or plant a shade tree in the Right-of-Way, park, or any public property.
2. Responsibilities.
 - a. The Township may remove or cause to be removed, by the appropriate agency/ contractor, any tree or part thereof which is in an unsafe condition or which by reason of its nature is injurious to sewers, electric power lines, gas lines, water lines, or other public improvements, or is seriously affected with any injurious insect or disease.
 - b. The property owner of land abutting the public Right-of-Way shall be responsible for the cost of all maintenance or replanting of shade trees, with the exception of street trees located within the public right-of-way in Town Center (TC), Special Commercial (SC) or Planned Business (PB) districts. This shall include pruning, mulching, and damage to curb, gutter, sidewalks, or the paved area of the cartway, deemed to be in need of repair. The property owner shall be liable for costs of all work completed by either the Township or a contractor hired to perform the work. The Township retains the right to collect fees either by lien or by subject payment(s).
 - c. Property owners of land abutting the public area with the tree, with the exception of street trees located within the public right of-way in Town Center (TC), Special Commercial (SC) or Planned Business (PB) districts, have the option to perform routine tree care on all street trees.
3. Standards of Care
 - a. Tree pruning and mulching shall be in conformance with ANSI pruning standards and the Companion guide for best management practices by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA).
 - b. It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, Department entity, or organization to top any street tree, park tree, or other tree on public property. Trees severely damaged by storms or other causes, or certain trees under utility wires or other obstruction where other pruning practices are impractical, may be exempted from this section at the determination of the Township and/or its authorized designee.
 - c. All stumps of street trees shall be removed to a minimum of 4" below grade.

Stumps of street trees not abutting a public street, property, or access to utilities or easements are exempt from this requirement.

- d. Underground or overhead electrical utility lines running through a shade tree, whether charged or uncharged, shall not be allowed to come into contact with any portion of the tree.

4. Public Tree Prohibited Activities. The following acts shall be considered hazardous to shade trees and are prohibited, except in case of an emergency, or for the protection of life or property:

- a. Breaking or injuring, in any manner, a shade tree protected by this ordinance.
- b. Climbing with spurs any shade tree other than a tree permitted to be removed.
- c. Interfering with the main roots of any shade tree in any manner that would be detrimental to the health of the tree; including but not limited to excavation and toxic soil treatment.
- d. Permanently attaching any rope, sign, wire, or other fixture such as house numbers or lights to any shade tree, without prior approval of/from the Shade Tree Commission Designee. Temporary decorations for the holidays shall not be considered to be permanent.
- e. Misuse or removal of any protective device placed on or around any shade tree.
- f. Attachment of any electrical wire, insulator, or any other device for the purpose of securing any wire to a shade tree. that would be detrimental to the tree's survival.
- g. Fastening a bicycle, carriage, animal or motor vehicle to the tree or its supports.
- h. Attaching any advertisement, notice, or sign in any manner.
- i. Pouring, spraying, or disbursing any chemical or substance deleterious to the tree's life on, in, or around the tree, other than approved products to prevent or treat disease and infestation.
- j. Building or kindling a fire near any tree or its limbs and foliage.

- k. Interfering with any representative of the Township engaged in pruning, spraying, removing, or caring for trees.
- l. Driving nails or spikes into any shade tree or street tree that would be detrimental to the tree's survival.

B. Private Tree Responsibility.

1. Clearance. All properties in control of shade trees will maintain the shade tree to allow for a minimum of 9' of clearance over a public sidewalk and a minimum of 16' of clearance over any public street or highway. The Township will be required to notify the property owner of any and all violations as per the provisions of this ordinance.
2. Public Health Nuisances. The Township may remove or cause to be removed any dead or diseased tree within the township limits that is declared by the Township to be a public health nuisance. The Township will notify the owner in writing of such trees, and removal shall be in accordance with this ordinance at the owner's expense. If the owner does not abate the public health nuisance within the timeframe listed on the notice, the Township may proceed without notice to abate the unlawful conduct and charge the actual cost of abatement to the property owner. Removal of the tree will also include the removal of the stump. The stump will be either removed completely or ground down 4 inches below grade. The void will be filled with clean soil, compacted, and seeded.

C. Emergency Situations.

1. Public safety. If, in the opinion of the Township, any tree or trees or other vegetation endanger public safety or harbors disease or insects, the Township shall have the right to plant, prune, maintain and remove trees, plants, and shrubs within the right-of-way or bounds of all streets, alleys, lanes, squares, and public grounds, or any that extend into the right-of-way, to preserve or enhance the beauty of such public places.
2. Clear Passage: Without respect to any of the provisions of this ordinance, the Township will retain the right to cut, remove, trim, or perform any other form of maintenance to ensure clear passage of the public rights-of-way within the Township. Abington Township also retains the right to assess and bill for time and materials to the person(s) responsible for the blockage or unsafe condition within or over the public right-of-way.
3. Use of Outside Contractors. The clearing of downed trees within the public right-of-way is generally performed by the Public Works Department of the Township; however, due to the size of the trees involved and nature of the storms that caused this type of damage, the Township retains the right to use outside contractors in emergency situations.

Appendix V. List of Grants and Donations to Abington Township in Support of Shade Tree Commission Projects

Year	Title	Grant or Donation (\$)	Cash Match (\$)	In-Kind Match (Time or \$)	Notes	Status
2013	PCF Municipal Challenge Grant	5,000	0	STC time	Street Tree Inventory	Complete
2014	MTRP Utility Grant	5,500	0	STC time	Demonstrate Right Tree Right Place in public spaces- Crestmont Park and Parkdale Avenue	Complete
2015	TD Green Streets	20,000	0	STC time	Public and private trees- Grove Park and Roslyn neighborhood	Complete
2016	TD Charitable Foundation	2,500	0	STC time	Complete planting TD Green Street at Grove Park	Complete
2017	Promark Landscaping			TBD	Heritage ash tree removal	Complete
2017	CSX Tree Giveaway	5,000	0	STC time	Partnered with PHS. Abington \$4,500	Complete
2017	C2P2 AWS Trail Phase 1	40,000	20,000	20,000	Restoration and trail in AWS	Complete
2018	Community Forestry Management	8,750	5,250	2,800	Tree ordinance development	Complete
2018	TW Watershed	6,608	4,714		Hallowell Park riparian	Not selected
2018	One Tree Planted/ Inframark LLC	1,000	0	STC time	Rockwell Park, with Inframark volunteers	Complete
2019	Private Donations	8,090	0	STC time	AWS and Ardsley Park	Complete
2019	Inframark LLC	1,000	0	STC time	RBGC and Grove, with Inframark volunteers	Complete
2019	Laurel Hill Gardens	1,445	0	STC time	Container trees for Penbryn Park	Complete
2019	Promark Landscaping	TBD	0	STC time	Site work to prepare for planting at Hallowell Riparian	Complete
2019	Laurel Hill Gardens	7,250	0		Trees and Shrubs donation	Complete
2020	Community Forestry Management	11,700	9,376	2,716	Municipal Tree Action Plan	Complete
2020	PECO Green Regions	10,000	0	STC oversight	Street Tree replacement along Old York Rd	Applied 11/19; not selected for funding

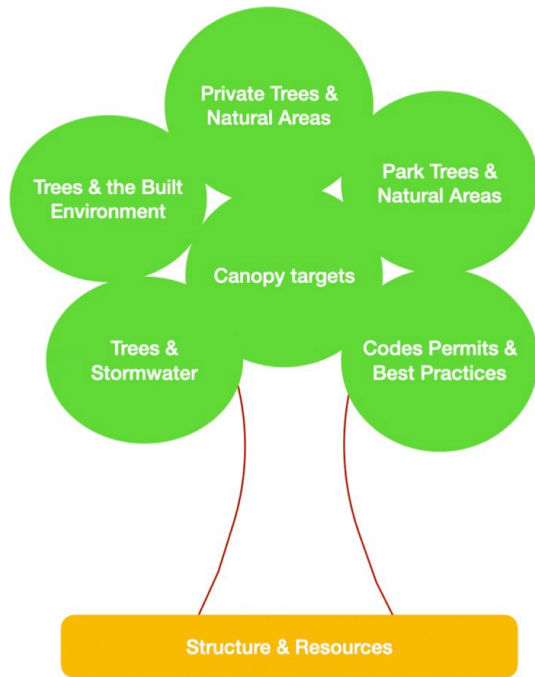
2021	C2P2 AWS Trail Phase 2	115,075	73,035	42,040	Restoration and continued trail in AWS	Applied 4/20; received grant; grant is underway; final numbers to be updated on completion
2020	C2P2 AWS Trail Phase 2		16,450		Paid to Think Green	Design services to apply for grant
2020	Inframark LLC	1,000			Support ASD Environmental Science Club for Baederwood Park stewardship	Complete
2021	Inframark LLC	1,000			Planting at Crestmont Park	Anticipated-note-we never asked
2021	Giant Heal the Planet	25,000			Proposal to develop volunteer system and pilot with invasive plan management events	Rough estimate; not selected for funding
2021	PHS/CSX	7,500			Proposal to develop system and host tree giveaway	Rough estimate-note-we never applied
2022	TC Energy	10,000		STC time	Proposal to fund free tree giveaway Sept 2022	Complete
Annually	TreeVitalize Bare Root Trees	60,000	20,000	STC time	Bare root trees	Apply in September for November planting
TOTALS		\$346,810	\$144,111	\$67,566	Includes completed and pending	

Appendix VI. Abington Shade Tree Commission Annual Report, May 2022



Annual Report

Trish Gallagher
May 2022



Master Tree Action Plan



Eagle Scout Project at AWS



Tree Planting and Tending

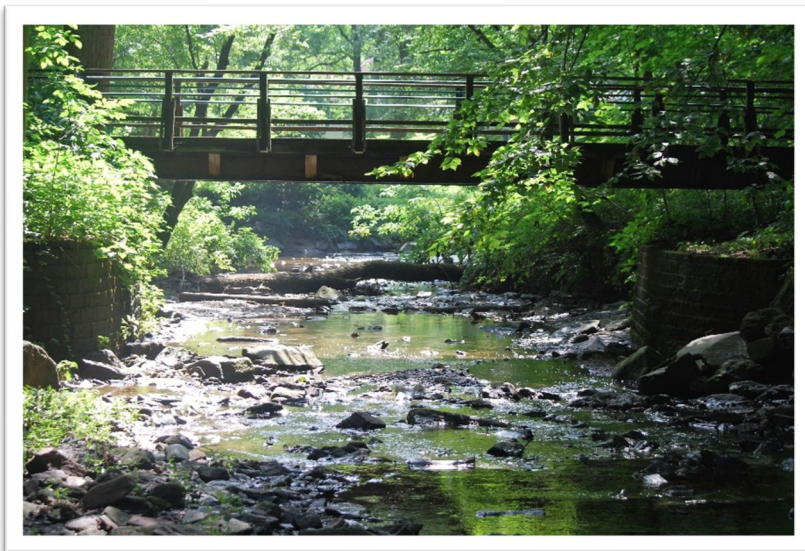


STC Mission

We seek to preserve and enhance Abington's urban forest and the essential ecosystem services that trees uniquely provide.

Urban Forests are systems of trees, other vegetation, and water within any urban area.

Ecosystem Services relate to the varied and substantial benefits that urban forests deliver. These include economic, environmental, and social benefits.





STC Members

Appointed STC:

Carl Andresen – Joe Ascenzi – Trish Gallagher – John Kennedy – Collin Watson

Associates:

Andrew Christy – Tim Gilmour – Ed Hayes – Kathy Helmsley – Krystn Kuckelman – Anna Nicholaides – Fan Plasket – Roman Proscyk – Donna Rohner – Steve Sacavage – Ed Smeal – Rita Stevens – Kathy Weir – Mark Wiggins

STC Transition to New Leadership

- ▶ Chair: Mr. Collin Watson
- ▶ Reappointment: Mr. John Kennedy
- ▶ New Appointment: Dr. Trish Gallagher

- ▶ Dr. Rita Stevens resigned when she moved to Ohio last fall. She continues to serve as an advisor to the STC during this transition and was recently appointed to the Tree Commission in Lakewood, OH.



Agenda

1. **2021-2022 Progress**
2. **Call to Action to protect our urban forest**
3. **Priorities for 2022-2023**
 - **Board endorsement** of Master Tree Action Plan (MTAP) and Tree Ordinance
 - **Engagement of Parks Director** in implementing the MTAP and developing an invasive species management plan
 - **Increased involvement of Planning, Engineering and Construction Services** in tree preservation, protection, and replacement
 - **Stewardship** of trees on private property



2021-2022 PROGRESS

Basic Measures and Funding

Basic measures

- ▶ **Tree City USA certification** for the 15th year
- ▶ **Tree City Growth Award** recognizing high levels of tree care and community engagement to build sustainable, long-term community forestry programs.
- ▶ **Strong Volunteer Engagement** 1744 hours community service at more than 20 events

Funding

- ▶ **Operational Budget** \$6,000 dedicated to tree planting and preservation
- ▶ **1 Major Grant in Progress, 1 Completed in 2021** (9-year total grant funding of \$297,000)
 - ▶ 2020 Tree Vitalize Forestry Management Grant. \$24K project/ \$9K cash match
Long Term Master Tree Plan completed in June 2021
 - ▶ 2021-2024 DCNR grant for Phase 2 AWS; \$230K project/ \$68K cash match
Design completed; construction targeted for Fall 2022



2021-2022 Progress

Planning & Advisory

Planning

- ▶ Continued serving on the **Comprehensive Plan Development Team (CPDT)**, ensuring that the new plan will effectively set the vision for sustaining Abington's tree canopy.
- ▶ In partnership with Township staff and guided by the CPDT, completed the detailed 10-year **Master Tree Action Plan.**

Advisory

- ▶ Provided **routine field support** to Township staff in matters concerning trees, and **oversight of forest restoration** and **tree planting** projects
- ▶ In partnership with Township staff and the EAC, reviewed **Land Development applications.**



2021-2022 Progress

Outreach and Stewardship

More than 20 Events at:

- Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary
- Baederwood Park
- Glenside Weldon
- Edge Hill Woods
- Copper Beech Elementary

Forest Restoration Sites:

- Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary
- Baederwood Park
- Boy Scout Game Preserve

Volunteers Included:

- Students from ASD Environmental Science Club
- Boy Scouts
- Community members
- Giant employees

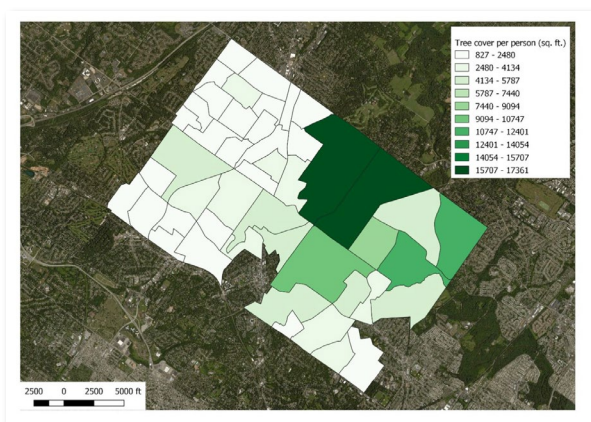
Key Partnerships:

- Abington: EAC, ASD
- Corporate: Inframark LLC
- Local Nonprofits: Boy Scouts of America, Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust, TTF Watershed Association, Wissahickon Trails



Call to Action: Protect and Grow our Urban Forest

Canopy Distribution



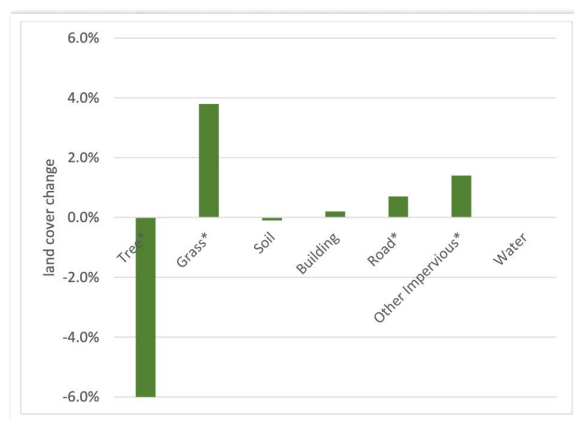
2017 LIDAR data

Average canopy by neighborhood varies from 26% to 65%

Trees per resident varies from 1 to 7 trees per person

- **Address inequities**

Canopy Change

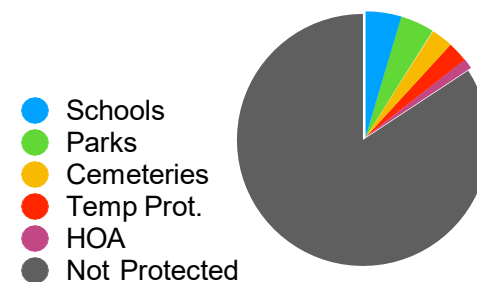


2004-2017 Google Earth Imagery

~1 out of 8 trees lost during 2004-2017 primarily to turf and 'other impervious'

- **Increase canopy**
- **Manage invasive species in natural and restored woodlands**

Land Use



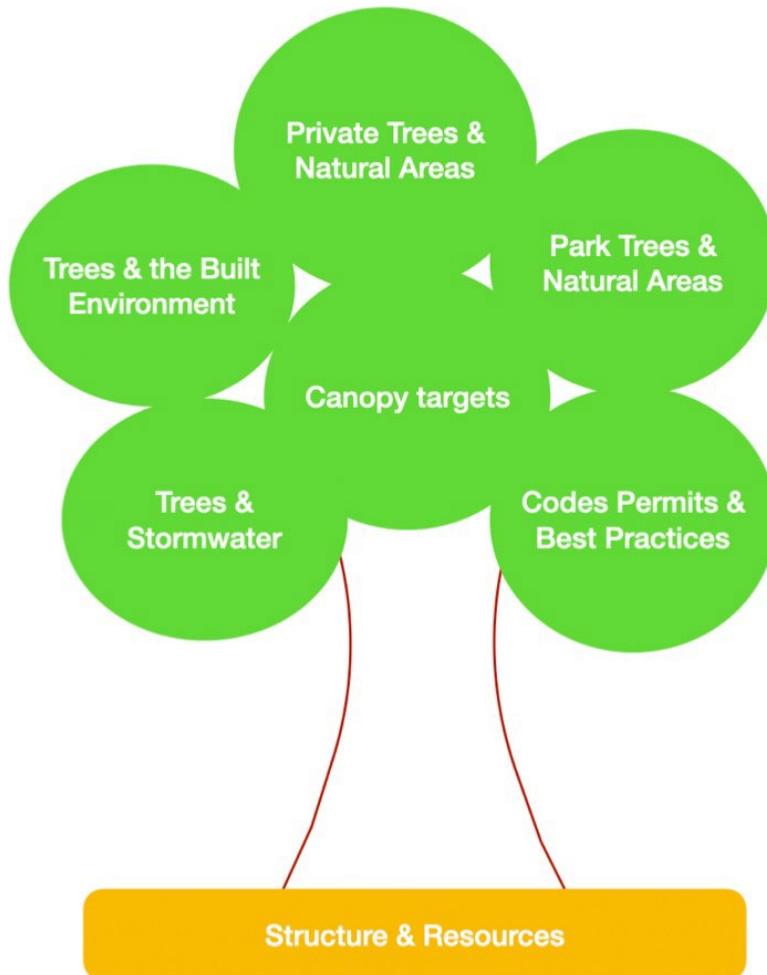
16% protected open space of which parkland is a small %
72% single family residential

- **Educate and engage homeowners to protect existing and establish new trees**



2022-2023 Priorities

Master Tree Action Plan



- Critically important for the Board to formally **adopt the Master Tree Action Plan**
- MTAP will help protect our urban forest and the ecosystem services it provides



2022-2023 Priorities

Advisory

- Critically important for the Board to **formally adopt 2019 STC recommendations for Tree Preservation, Protection and Replacement (proposed ordinance)**
- These recommendations will help protect and grow our urban forest, affect future land development, and streamline Land Development reviews



2022-2023 Priorities

Advisory

- **Engage new Parks Director** in implementing the MTAP and developing an invasive species management plan
- **Increase involvement of Planning, Engineering and Construction Services** in preserving, protecting and replacing trees
- **Collaborate with EAC** to streamline Land Development review and recommendations



2022-2023 Priorities

Homeowner Engagement



2022 Arbor Day Tree Giveaway

100 trees

Significant demand

Educate and Engage Homeowners

To aid in stewardship of trees on private properties

Fall Tree Planting Events

Sites TBD



Summary

Progress

Planning – Advisory – Outreach – Stewardship

Call to Action

Equity – Sustainability – Private/Public Partnership

Immediate Priorities

- Board Endorsement of Master Tree Plan and Tree Ordinance
- Increase Involvement of Township Departments in Tree Protection, Preservation and Replacement
- Streamline Land Development Advisory Process
- Increase Homeowner Engagement



**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE MANY
VOLUNTEERS WHO HELP
MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE OUR
SHARED GREEN SPACE!**



STC@abingtonpa.gov