

**Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program**  
**5-year Strategic Action Plan**  
**2021-2026**

<b>Desired Future Condition 1: Biological Diversity</b>		
<b>Conserve biological diversity across all landscapes.</b>		
<b>Strategies</b>		<b>Priorities</b>
1.1	Promote sustainable planning, use, and management of public greenspaces in villages and downtowns, such as village greens, town forests, parks, trails, playgrounds, and other public gathering spaces.	✓
1.2	Increase awareness, support, and implementation of planning for urban and community forests at local, regional, and statewide scales.	✓
1.3	Encourage long-term conservation efforts such as acquisition and planning by partners to keep forests forested and address forest fragmentation.	
1.4	Promote biological diversity and resiliency in urban and community forests through planning, use, and management that sustain diverse forest types and tree species, conditions, and age.	

<b>Desired Future Condition 2: Forest Health &amp; Productivity</b>		
<b>Maintain and enhance forest ecosystem health and productivity.</b>		
<b>Strategies</b>		<b>Priorities</b>
2.1	Identify, facilitate, and/or transfer research by academic, government, or community-led science initiatives that improves our understanding of urban and community forests, including urban forest inventory and analysis (Urban FIA).	
2.2	Survey, monitor, and support slow the spread and prevention efforts of invasive species that impact urban and community forests.	
2.3	Expand resources to assist communities to prepare for, mitigate, and recover from threats to urban and community forests including severe weather, fragmentation, climate change, and invasive pests.	✓
2.4	Increase communities' capacity to create resilient urban and community forests through growing or acquiring high-quality trees and a diversity of species.	

2.5	Encourage landscape level planning and management activities that maintain health, productivity, and ecological functions of urban and community forests considering climate change.	
2.6	Conduct technical assistance to communities, including volunteer groups to help them understand, evaluate, and/or implement actions to advance sustainable urban and community forestry programs.	✓

Desired Future Condition 3: Forest Products & Ecosystem Services		
Maintain and enhance forest contribution to ecosystem services.		
Strategies		Priorities
3.1	Facilitate opportunities to utilize urban wood including after natural disasters or pest infestations.	
3.2	Identify and facilitate opportunities to integrate local agroforestry into urban and community forestry in public spaces.	
3.3.	Promote awareness and use of urban and community forestry practices to protect water quality in rural and urban Vermont landscapes through implementation of low impact development (LID), green stormwater infrastructure (GSI), and sound silvicultural practices that support resilient community trees and forests.	
3.4	Promote awareness and use of urban and community forestry practices at the municipal level to adapt climate change strategies that mitigate urban air temperatures, water and air pollution, and support biodiversity.	✓
3.5	Monitor and explore opportunities for forest carbon credits for urban and community forestry in Vermont.	
3.6	Promote awareness and stewardship around the ecosystem services of community forests and other public spaces.	
3.7	Fund, promote, and record progress on implementation of best practices and outreach initiatives that support functional ecosystems at local and regional scales.	✓
3.8	Facilitate impact mitigation of invasive forest pests at regional and statewide levels and the associated ecosystem services and cultural losses resulting from infestations and the decline of specific impacted tree populations.	

Desired Future Condition 4: Land Ethic		
Maintain and enhance an ethic of respect for the land, sustainable use, and exemplary management.		
Strategies		Priorities
4.1	Create awareness and foster recognition of the ecological, social, cultural, and economic contributions that urban and community forests provide to Vermont, and the need to sustain forest health and productivity to ensure continued benefits for this and future generations.	✓
4.2	Maintain and expand public outreach, social media, and technology transfer.	
4.3	Educate and engage the public, including students, in urban and community forest stewardship and community science, including Vermont Tree Stewards and Forest Pest First Detectors.	
4.4	Educate landowners, tree wardens, forestry professionals, professional arborists, municipal staff, and land managers on the benefits of urban and community forest stewardship.	✓
4.5	Promote the implementation and demonstration of sustainable forest management on private and public lands, including town forests.	
4.6	Promote urban and community forests as an opportunity to respond to the COVID 19 global pandemic and help Vermont communities restore civic life, build social connections, spark economic vitality, and improve environmental sustainability.	✓
4.7	Support volunteer groups, particularly municipal tree committees, conservation commissions, and town forest committees, in issues of community governance and leadership.	

Desired Future Condition 5: Legal, Institutional, & Economic Framework		
Vermont has a legal, institutional, and economic framework in place for forest conservation and sustainability.		
Strategies		Priorities
5.1	Sustain and expand funding opportunities to support local, state, and regional efforts for urban and community forest stewardship, health, and sustainability.	✓
5.2	Educate state leadership, including legislatures, secretaries, commissioners, and division/department directors of programming efforts, opportunities, and challenges.	
5.3	Educate communities, volunteers, and residents about urban and community forest policies, governance models, rules, and laws including Vermont's Tree Warden statutes.	✓
5.4	Advocate for policies, programs, and initiatives that assist in urban and community forest stewardship, health, and sustainability.	
5.5	Strive to strategically identify emerging issues while meeting immediate challenges and establish an appropriate level of infrastructure and staffing.	

5.6	Foster strategic partnerships to deliver innovative urban and community forestry programming and supporting organizational capacity.	✓
5.7	Promote and cultivate cross-program and cross-agency cooperation and communication, within Vermont as well as with regional and national partners, to improve efficiency and effectiveness.	
5.8	Maintain and develop data management systems, ensure indicators are appropriate to monitor progress, and share data among partners to enhance internal and external communications and collaborations.	
5.9	Support professional development, continued learning, and succession planning for program staff.	
5.10	Foster an organizational culture within the program that rewards excellence, celebrates accomplishments, encourages teamwork, and recognizes achievements.	
5.11	Increase access to the benefits of trees and urban and community forests for all Vermonters by applying a lens of environmental justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity across programming.	✓

### **UCF Key Partners to Support Action Strategies**

- Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets
- Agency of Commerce and Community Development
- Agency of Education
- Agency of Transportation
- American Society of Landscape Architects – VT Chapter
- Animal and Health Plant Inspection Services
- Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions
- Buildings and General Services
- Center for Northern Woodlands Education
- Department of Environmental Conservation
- Department of Health
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Fish and Wildlife Department
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Green Industry Professionals – Arborists, Landscapers, Landscape Architects, Nurseryman
- International Society of Arboriculture, NE Chapter
- Land Trusts
- Municipalities
- Society of American Forests
- The Nature Conservancy
- Utilities
- University of Vermont Extension
- University of Vermont – Sea Grant
- University of Vermont
- USDA Forest Service
- Vermont Association of Conservation Districts
- Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies/individual Regional Planning Commissions
- Vermont Coverts
- Vermont Emergency Management
- Vermont Land Trust
- Vermont League of Cities and Towns
- Vermont Natural Resources Council
- Vermont Nursery and Landscape Association
- Vermont Planners Association
- Vermont Woodlands Association
- Watershed Organizations

