

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report details the results of the recent citizen-driven, 100% volunteer street tree inventory for the East Row neighborhood in Newport, KY. It was done to provide a basis for developing a working plan to proactively manage the valuable street trees.

Highlights of the inventory report and results follow:

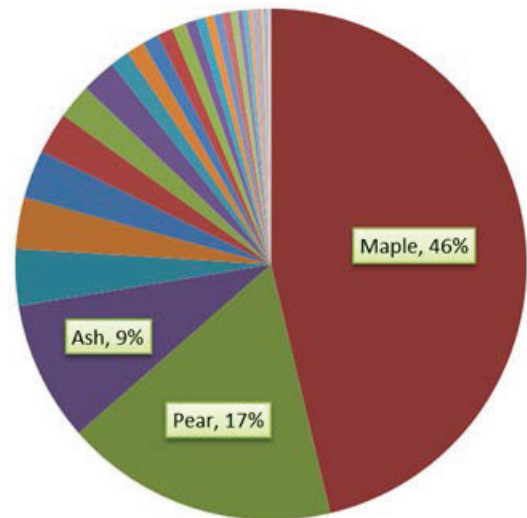
**Diversity Needed.** Maples and Pears make up a combined 63% of all species in the East Row. Species diversity goals dictate that no one genus/species should represent more than 5-10% of the total urban tree canopy. Any further planting should exclude maples and pears to diversify tree species within the neighborhood.

**Significant Benefit of Street Trees.** It was found that the street trees in the East Row provide a multitude of benefits, including:

- an estimated \$8-\$32 million boost to property values,
- over \$43,000 in annual energy savings for residents,
- removal of 283 pounds of particulate matter and 2,424 pounds (over 2 tons) of chemical pollution from the air annually,
- reduction of 754,237 pounds (over 375 tons) of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere annually,
- interception of over 1.6 million gallons of stormwater runoff each year – a value of \$44,837,
- noise reduction from I-471 (just one tree-lined block away from I-471 lowers highway noise by over 15dB),
- and finally, street trees play a large role in building the solid community we are so fortunate to have through temperature moderation, better health, and more successful business districts.

**Inventory Levels Dropping.** The total number of street trees added and removed over the last 10 years by individual and city activity has dropped by 52, or 5% (excluding a community garden club project). More new plantings are needed on a community scale to maintain and increase the urban tree canopy.

**Species Diversity**  
2013 East Row Tree Inventory



*East Row annual Block Party,  
under a canopy of mature street trees.*

**Challenges.** There are a number of challenges facing the East Row urban tree canopy.

- **Pests.** There are two major pests with the potential for large impact on our street trees:
  - **EAB.** The Emerald Ash Borer has already made an impact and will cause an additional 9% drop in inventory from the loss of Ash trees. A proactive replacement plan is needed for the Ash population.
  - **ALB.** The Asian Longhorned Beetle was found nearby and constitutes a bigger threat than any pest seen in decades. 48% of the East Row tree canopy is susceptible to this pest. As treatment is not currently available, containment is the only option to avoiding mass tree loss. Containment requires spread prevention and early detection education. Further diversity in tree species is also critical.

The EAB and ALB together have the potential to decimate 58% of the current tree canopy, as shown in the images below.



- **Resident/City Responsibility.** Most East Row residents are not aware that they (not the city) are responsible for regular care and pruning of their street trees.
- **Tree Education** (care and selection). Much of the damage to street trees today come from lack of education on how to care for trees, along with the fact of unawareness of responsibilities mentioned above. A significant education campaign is needed.
- **City Capabilities.** The Newport Tree Board is inactive and there is no urban forester on staff. On top of which, Public Works staff has been cut substantially in past years.

**Next Steps.** The East Row committee on street trees will be meeting to develop a plan/program to protect and proactively manage our street trees based on this report. The plan will likely include a planting program, significant education on tree selection and care, a “Heritage Tree” program created to build appreciation for existing significant trees, and possibly in future years work to improve the minimal tree canopy on the west side of Newport. We will be exploring grant funding as well.

It is vital to the success of this work for the committee to partner with the city to determine how to work together to achieve many of these initiatives. A meeting with city staff is an important next step to discuss initiatives, parameters, the tree board, and more.