

SUCCESS STORY

"Hiring First City Arborist"

City of Mountain Brook

Project Statement: To hire the City's first professional staff person to oversee and manage the community's urban forestry program.

Location: Mountain Brook is a city located in Jefferson County, Alabama. As of the 2000 census, the population of the city is 20,604. Mountain Brook is a suburb of Birmingham.

Background: Mountain Brook is one of Alabama's most heavily urban forested communities. An assessment by the Alabama Forestry Commission revealed that the city has a 92.03% urban forest canopy. The city government is recognizing that urban forest management is necessary to maintain the health and vigor of this resource and to mitigate damage caused by storm events. As a result, the local government decided to create its first ever City Arborist position and fill it with a qualified profession.

In 2003, the City received an Urban & Community Forestry financial award through Auburn University in the amount of \$20,162 to fund a City Arborist position for the first year. The city added \$27,579 as its cash and in-kind match.

Results: The City of Mountain Brook hired their first City Arborist in 2003. Since then accomplishments include:

- Identification of publicly owed risk trees that pose a safety threat to people, places, and things.
- Developing a pruning schedule for publicly owned trees.
- Training municipal employees.
- Removing hazard trees on public property.
- Address tree issues affected by city's policy on liability.
- Develop a master tree plan.
- Develop a tree farm to supply urban trees for planting.
- Develop an educational program in city.

Since the completion of this project, the City of Mountain Brook has kept this position and funds it through the city budget.

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